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"Something inhuman has come to Tarker's Mills, as unseen as the full moon riding the night sky high above. It is the Werewolf...."

—Stephen King, *Cycle of the Werewolf*

January/February 2001
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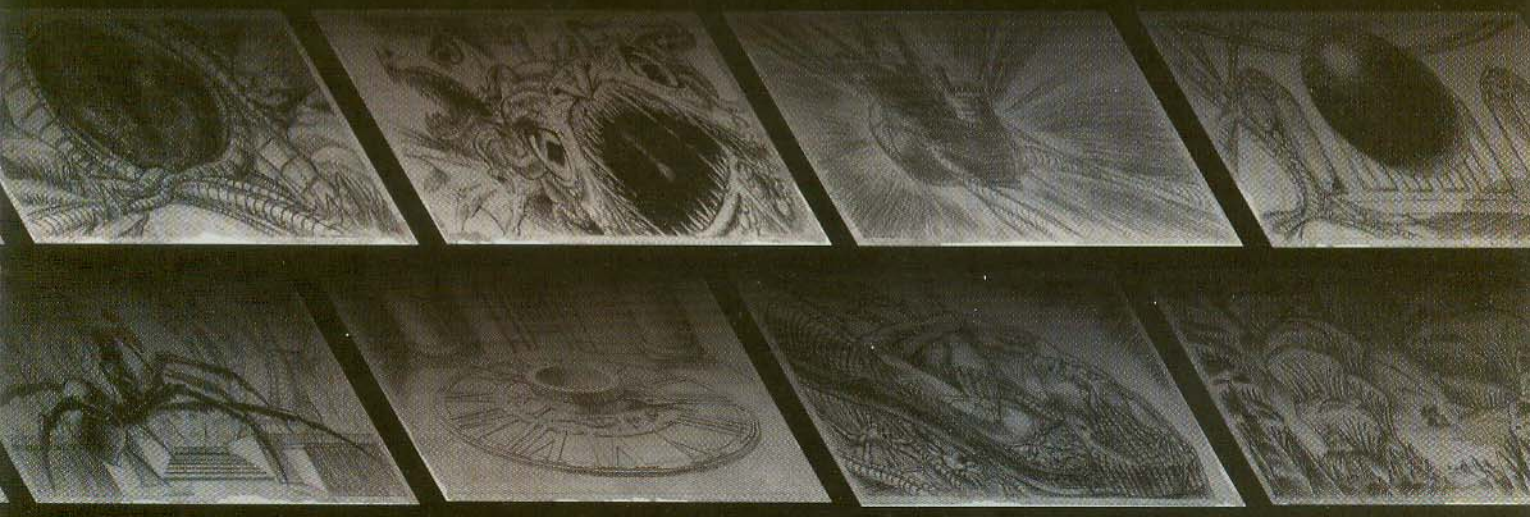

Cover

Spoiled from birth and rotten to the core, Lolth's daughter plots to seize control of her mother's dominion. Stephen Daniele shows us the wicked demonspawn Laveth and her vile blade from "The Harrowing."

Dead... Again!

Exploring the Blakeney Factor

by Christopher Perkins

In my Wednesday night campaign, we've created a new verb. "To blakeney" means to lose characters repeatedly and often. The verb refers to Shawn Blakeney, one of the players in my campaign (and a swell guy, to boot).

Death has claimed three of Shawn's characters. His first character, Gunthar the halfling, was *disintegrated*, reconstituted through magic, *polymorphed* into a grizzly bear, and clubbed to death by a hill giant. His second character, an aquatic half-elf named Azurphi, tried to distinguish himself by backstabbing a gelugon devil with an evil sword. This might have worked had Azurphi been a rogue instead of a wizard. Alone and unable to outpace the villain, he was blasted into oblivion by the gelugon's *cone of cold*. Shawn's third character, a half-orc paladin of Heironeous named Olga, was valiantly battling monks in Rictavio Kalavan's Starborn Theater when she was torn asunder by a *lightning bolt* leveled by the party's gnome nemesis, Erellak Golgof. (If you don't know Erellak, you haven't been reading Dave Gross's editorial column in *Dragon Magazine*. In short, Erellak is what all good campaign villains should be—devious, likeable in a detestable sort of way, and most of all, lucky beyond belief.)

Shawn has been a terrific sport, tolerating mockery from the other players in my campaign. Death comes suddenly and unexpectedly during the game. As a DM, I never set out to deliberately kill off characters; it just happens, and usually at the worst times. Right now, I'm thinking about awarding Shawn a special trophy—Most Deaths Ever—as a consolation prize for all the ribbing he's endured in recent months.

Shawn's closest competitors for the award are Sean Reynolds and Johnny Wilson, whose characters have each died twice. (Sean's dwarf character, Droo, has also been turned to stone twice, but in both cases he lived to tell the tale.) Other players—like Stan! and Matthew Sernett—have come close to losing characters but have never actually "blakeneyed."

Losing characters in a long-running campaign can be problematic. For the player who wants his character to develop and become more powerful, losing that character means going all the way back to the drawing board. Meanwhile, the DM struggles to find a fresh and logical way to include the new character in the campaign's carefully entwined storyline. The best solution, I think, is to let the player determine how his next character should arise. That takes some of the pressure off the DM and encourages the player to create a character who not only fits into the existing campaign framework but also is immediately useful, providing skills and abilities that the party currently lacks.

Finding new and clever ways to introduce characters into a long-running campaign would make an interesting article for *Dragon Magazine*, as would an article discussing ways to appease players who "blakeney" more often than the Law of Averages would allow. I look forward to hearing about the strategies you've used in *your* campaigns. With players like Shawn, I need all the help I can get!

Chris Perkins

Dungeon®

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Letters
Readers with Issues

Tell us what you think of the adventures in this issue. Write to "Letters," DUNGEON Magazine, 1801 Lind Avenue S.W., Renton, WA 98055 or email us at dungeon@wizards.com.

Surviving Issue #82

First, we would like to say that we enjoy the new D&D game a lot. We are writing to tell you about our first 3rd-Edition campaign. Our DM (Lewis) bought the *D&D Adventure Game* boxed set and revamped it by doubling the creatures and designing a town for the PCs (who now have a great respect for gelatinous cubes). Then he ran "Evil Unearthed" in Issue #82 and pumped up the levels of the adversaries as recommended for 4th-level PCs. We really enjoyed this one! Then he ran "Playing with Fire." That one hurt a little because Lewis brought back the Fire Lord, but the PCs prevailed. Then he ran "Eye for an Eye." The players were expecting a big, bad boss at the end; when they discovered that it was only a 3rd-level villager who had caused all the havoc, the players' jaws dropped.

We compliment you on the adventures and hope you keep up the good work!

Lewis Leech, Shawn Leech, David Leech, and J.R. Vaughn
Colorado Springs, CO

A Not-So-Good Thing

Some thoughts on Issues #82 and #83:

I agree with critics of the new artwork and layout. Adding smudges and wrinkled lines to the pages is neat, but it interferes with the reading. Maybe you can make a case for player handouts, but for most cases, it just gets in the way. Stick to plain white for text.

The black strips at the top and bottom of the pages (an attempt to make the magazine look like a book) don't thrill me either, and I would advise saving the ink.

I am not a fan of pictures at all, really. I would happily replace the full-page art at the beginning of each adventure with a Side Trek or other short adventure. I note that you have the cover art, a copy opposite the table of contents, and the same picture in the feature adventure. This is too much of a not-so-good thing.

I can't say the recent covers (#83 in particular) rate highly, but they are not that bad. I do wish to point out that the cover for Issue #83 doesn't reflect the proper ethos, being more of a horror picture than fantasy.

In Issue #83, you published two non-standard adventures ("London Calling" and "Alterations"). I do not demand that every adventure be standard D&D fare, but such variations are useless to me. Please include no more than one per issue.

The sidebars on how to adapt the adventures to different levels represent an improvement. I am not sure the effort is fully successful, but they triple the utility of the adventures, so they're worth the effort and quite possibly should be expanded.

David Argell
via email

David, you raise several points that have been mentioned in other letters as well. I think I can address most of them:

1. Like you, we were not pleased with the "smudgy" page treatment in Issue #82. You'll notice that we've whitened the pages to make them easier to read. The black strips at the top and bottom of the adventures call attention to the adventure title headers and page numbers and also give the magazine a "letterbox" look.

2. Although we rather like the full-page illustrations at the beginning of "feature-length" adventures, we will defer to our readers on this matter: If enough readers protest the inclusion of full-page art, we'll modify the design to accommodate them. Frankly, we don't have enough short adventures or Side Treks in inventory to fill quite so many gaps, but we certainly won't turn down a few more ad pages!

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4. The cover for Issue #83 not only captured the mood of Cameron Widen's horror-based adventure but also seemed appropriate for our Halloween issue. Expect the next several covers to fit more neatly into the fantasy genre.

5. Our readership is divided on the issue of generic vs. non-generic adventures. Some want generic D&D adventures only, and others want a mix of generic D&D adventures and other stuff (campaign-specific modules, non-D&D adventures, and so on). From this issue forward, we will publish D&D adventures only. As always, the specific modules that we publish will depend on the submissions we receive, but our first goal is to provide adventures that can be adapted to your home campaign setting with little or no effort. That said, I don't think our contributors set out to write "useless" adventures. Challenging, maybe. Fun, hopefully. Before dismissing an adventure out of hand, try running it with your players outside of your home campaign or on a night when not everyone can attend the game. As a change of pace, it might be worth the time after all.

6. We've received a lot of praise for the "Adapting the Adventures" sidebars. We don't want them to take up too much space, but we're glad you find them helpful.

I DON'T THINK OUR CONTRIBUTORS SET OUT TO WRITE "USELESS" ADVENTURES. CHALLENGING, MAYBE. FUN, HOPEFULLY.

He Said ...

I would first like to say that I think Issue #82 was great. it convinced me to spend $20 on the new *Player's Handbook*. One feature that I like is the "Scaling the Adventure" box found in each adventure. This makes it even easier to prepare for a game session at a moment's notice.

One thing that I have been seeing more frequently in the D&D game is the substitution of "she" for "he" and "her" for "him." To be honest, this complete feminization of the game kind of disturbs me—not that I think every generic person in the rule books ought to be referred to as "him," either. I think that the use of feminine and masculine pronouns should be at the discretion of the author, which would make the work more realistic and believable.

In "Evil Unearthed" (Issue #82), a lumberjack from Log's Landing is referred to as "she." How likely is it that a random lumberjack from the GREYHAWK campaign setting would be female, when a woman lumberjack is a rarity in our society today? In the 2nd-Edition books, a great majority of pronouns were masculine, although common sense dictated that the serving girl encountered in the tavern be referred to as "she." Other than that, the D&D game seems to be getting better and better.

Thanks for providing such wonderful adventures.

Russell Nichols
Raleigh, NC

Glad you enjoyed the issue, Russell! On the subject of pronouns, it is our policy to use both masculine and feminine pronouns as a way to represent not only our audience but society in general. Although D&D campaign settings include many Medieval elements, they are in many ways a reflection of the present rather than the past. Genders are represented equally in our game products, and so we have female paladins, pirates, blacksmiths, spies, clerics, hunters, rulers, and innkeepers. To us, a female lumberjack is no more improbable than a male lumberjack or, for that matter, a half-orc, a wizard, or a fire-breathing dragon.

Too "Funky"

I just got Issue #82. Normally I read your magazine shortly after receiving it. In this case, after thumbing through it, I don't think I want to read it for two reasons.

First, I find it hard to read. In an effort to make the magazine attractive, it has lost its readability, especially when dark backgrounds are used. The issue reminds me of those websites that use funky backgrounds, and nothing can be read.

Second, the issue uses the new D&D rules. Having not seen the new rules, the issue confused me. It would have helped to have a brief description of the way the new rules worked, but I suspect that there are too many changes to do that. At the very least, there needs to be a table that explains all of the abbreviations. If there is one, I have yet to find it.

You will be happy to hear that I bought the new edition of the *Player's Handbook*, so you win on that one. Still, I predict that your subscriptions will decrease with the drastic changes made in this issue. *[Au contraire! Subscriptions are on the rise.—Ed.]*

On the plus side, I love the idea of helping make the adventures variable levels, similar to what the RPGA Network does. I ran "The Best Laid Plans" (Issue #79) and "A Race Against Time" (Issue #81). In each case, it was easy to change the levels, and the players had a blast. I give the series a 10!

Keep up the effort, and thanks for a great magazine.

Scott Wallace
Pendleton, OR

Ω

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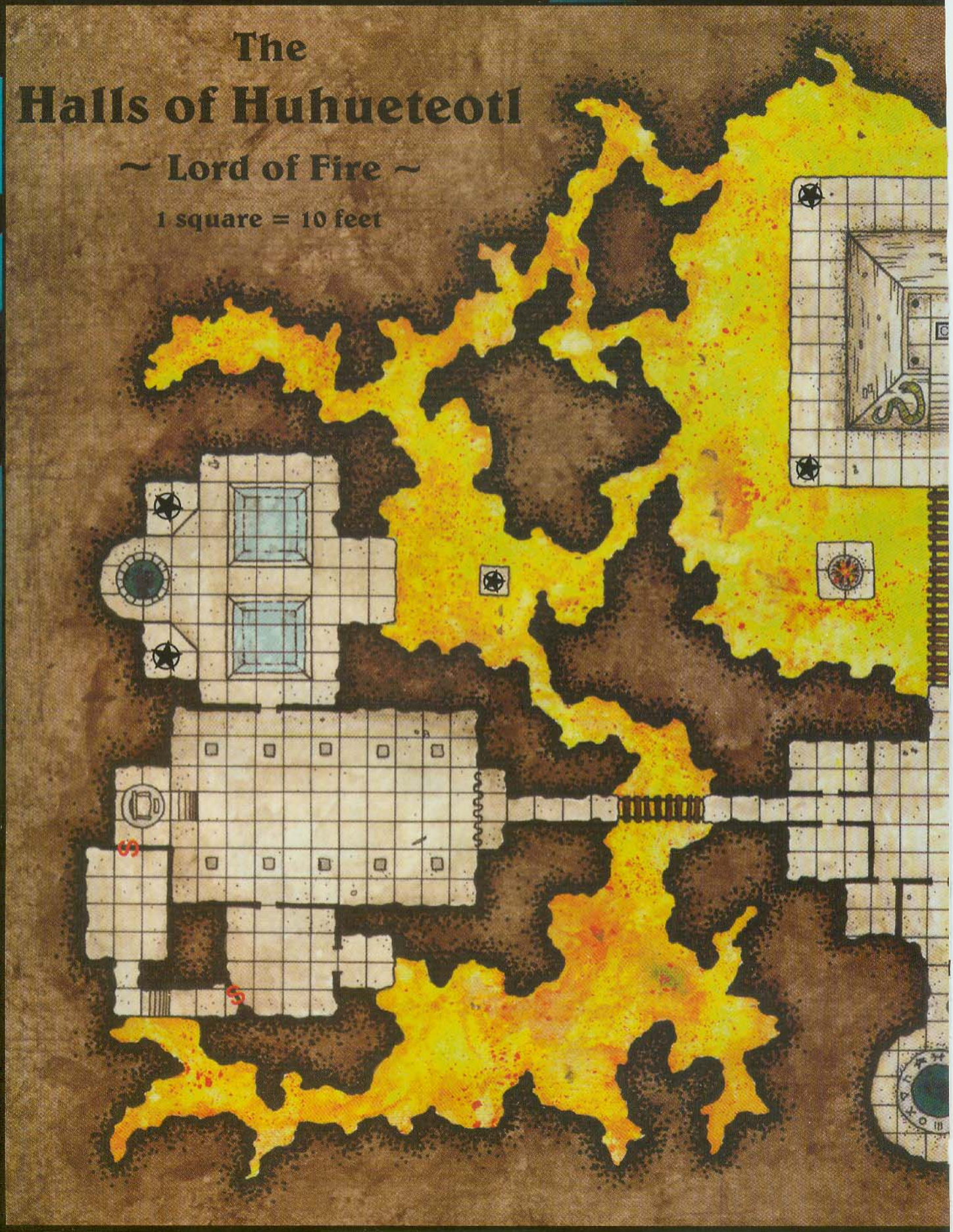
by Todd Morasch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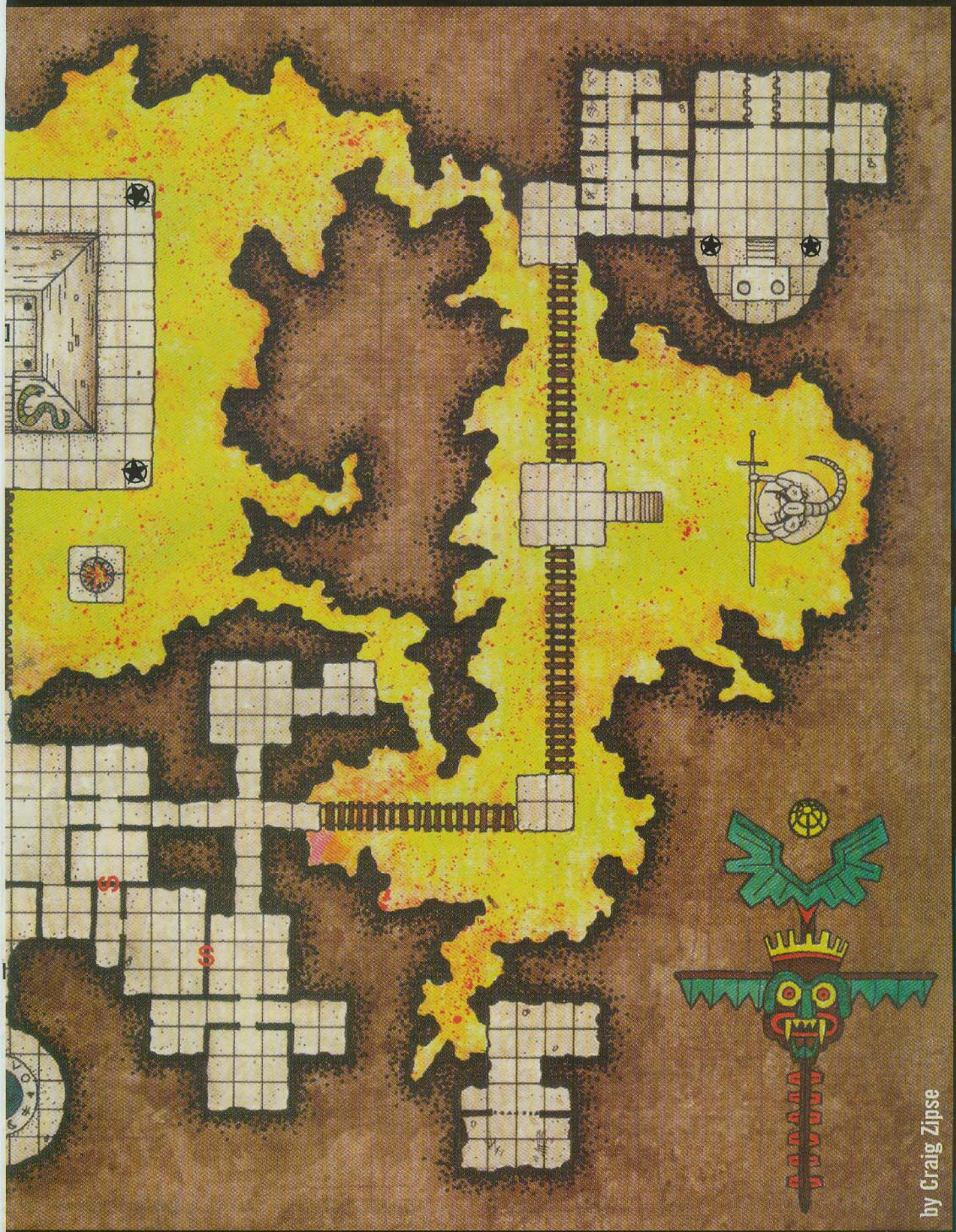


by Craig Zipse

The Harrowing

Web of the Spider Princess

by Monte Cook

artwork and cartography by Stephen Daniele

"The Harrowing" is a D&D adventure designed for four 15th-level characters. The mix of the group is not as important as the presence of a standard array of magic items appropriate to 15th-level characters. At least one +3 weapon should be available to the group. Expect the PCs to advance at least one level over the course of the adventure. For this adventure, feel free to award experience even for creatures and traps whose Challenge Ratings (CRs) are as low as 4, because the encounters in which they appear have been designed to be at least somewhat challenging for 15th-level characters. You can use the chart in Chapter 7 of the DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide *to extrapolate lower experience values by reducing the amount by 75% for each CR. For example, the* DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide *states that a CR 8 encounter is worth 375 XPs to a group of 15th-level PCs. By extrapolation, a CR 7 encounter is worth 281 XPs (350 XPs × 0.75), while a CR 6 encounter is worth 211 XPs (281 XPs × 0.75) to a 15th-level party.*

This adventure includes an illustration booklet keyed to specific encounters. The illustrations are meant to be shown to players when the PCs first enter a particular chamber or area, as noted in the adventure text.

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

Lolth, a chaotic evil deity of spiders and drow, rules over a domain called the Demonweb. The Demonweb is located on a plane of darkest evil and chaos called the Abyss, filled with demons, spiders, drow, and driders. Laveth, Lolth's daughter from a tryst with a male drow wizard, has remained hidden within her own home amid the fiends.

Coveting her mother's power and influence, the contemptuous and resourceful Laveth has been quietly plotting to seize power. If she gets her way, the Demonweb, or at least a part of it, will soon be hers. To begin her schemes, she spent years placing small portions of her own power into four receptacles, so that she could later call upon that power all at once. More recently, she contacted and forged a tenuous alliance with some slaadi mercenaries using a small portion of her vast wealth to pay them. She prepared a ceremony in which she could attain greater status—status enough to challenge her mother's control of the Demonweb. To accomplish this daring maneuver, she put two plans into motion at the same time: The slaadi mercenaries attacked the Demonweb, and Laveth's drow servants traveled to a Prime Material world to capture a powerful cleric of Corellon Larethian to sacrifice during the ceremony, known hereafter as simply the Harrowing.

Adventure Summary

The PCs stumble into the adventure on their own home plane, where the cleric Alerian is kidnapped. The PCs are drawn into the events by investigating the strange appearance of a number of dead birds on the ground throughout a wooded area. The investigation leads them to a colony of aranea living in some caves. These aranea guard a gateway that leads to the Demonweb. Exploring these caves, the PCs discover the gateway, as well as the basics of the Harrowing, learning about the sacrifice as well as the power receptacles into which Laveth has secreted her excess power.

Meanwhile, Alerian is taken before Laveth and she decides that he is a suitable sacrifice. The slaadi battle with the drow and demons of the Demonweb, although they are undone as Laveth betrays them. They were only meant as a diversion to draw attention away from her own activities and the kidnapping of the cleric, and so they no longer serve her needs. Without her support, the slaadi begin to fall.

The PCs make their way through a number of encounters in the Demonweb involving drow, demons, slaadi, and other monsters. Some of the drow support Lolth and fight against the slaadi. A few of the drow and most of the demons that the PCs encounter secretly work for Laveth. Even a fortress filled

Scaling the Adventure

This adventure is designed for a party of four 15th-level PCs. You can also run the adventure for smaller groups of higher level and larger groups of lower level.

Modifying the adventure for groups of four lower- or higher-level PCs is a fairly simple matter if you follow the general guidelines below:

10th- to 14th-level PCs

Be wary of encounters with ELs higher than the average level of the party. Too many of these encounters can destroy the party, particularly if the PCs aren't able to rest or heal in between.

If the Encounter Level (EL) of an encounter exceeds the party's average level by 4 or more, the encounter is probably too hard, particularly if the PCs are weakened. An EL 14+ encounter, for instance, is probably too tough for a party of four 10th-level PCs, even at their full strength. In such instances, you might remove the encounter, reduce the opposition in the encounter, or give the PCs more than one way to avoid or overcome the encounter (by allowing opportunities to parley or retreat, for instance).

PCs will require frequent healing and rest periods. To allow the PCs time to recuperate, consider stretching the time between the adventure's Stages. (See "Adventure Stages" below.) If the PCs are forced to rest after exploring the Aranea Caves, for instance, you might consider postponing Stage 2 of the adventure for an extra day.

Remember that lower-level PCs get more experience (XP) for overcoming higher EL encounters.

For details on tailoring encounters, see Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

16th- to 20th-level PCs

This adventure, as written, should prove quite challenging even to higher-level groups, particularly if the players are less experienced. However, there are ways to make the adventure even more challenging:

- Increase the frequency of random encounters in the Demonweb. Basically, add more Abyssal spiders, drow, slaadi, and demons. If the PCs seem to be waltzing through the Demonweb, have them stumble upon a pack of raving slaadi or a contingent of drow defenders. This is simpler than adjusting the levels and statistics of specific NPCs.
- Assume that demons who use their *summon tanar'ri* ability on the Demonweb always succeed.
- Give Laveth a pair of retriever pets with maximum hit points. During the Harrowing, they lurk among the webs in the Ritual Chamber (area P4).

with yochlol, the handmaidens of Lolth, hides secret subversion against the drow goddess.

Eventually, the slaadi are driven off by the Demonweb's defenders. However, by that time, Laveth is ready to complete the Harrowing ritual and sacrifice Alerian in her secret temple within the Demonweb Pits. Only quick thinking and quick action by the PCs can save Alerian's life and prevent Laveth from attaining vast power.

Running the Adventure

The adventure has three different stages of action. Many of the encounters change based upon the current stage of the adventure. When running the adventure, you need to keep careful track of the stages, so that when the PCs come to an encounter, they experience the action according to the proper chain of events. For example, in one encounter area, a number of slaadi fight drow defenders, but at the next stage the slaadi have been driven off and only the drow remain in that area (and now the slaadi might be in a different encounter area altogether). It's also possible that a group of adventurers could go to an area in one stage, and then return in another to find things have changed. In general, the adventure becomes more difficult as the stages progress. The stage summary, below, delineates at which points in the adventure the stages end, although, as always, you are in complete control.

Adventure Stages

Most of the creatures inhabiting the Demonweb are mobile, moving from area to area between stages. This means that areas that the PCs "clear out" can potentially become restocked with more NPCs or monsters. The exceptions to this are named NPCs, who remain dead if slain. Further, the change of stages does not undo changes wrought by the PCs. If the PCs *disintegrate* a wall in an area, it remains *disintegrated* even as the stages change. The stages change as follows:

Stage 1 to Stage 2: Stage 1 ends one day after the adventure begins.

Stage 2 to Stage 3: Stage 2 ends two days after Stage 1 concludes.

A Walk in the Woods

Begin the adventure anytime the PCs are moving through the forest. A few details have been included regarding the woods, but you can easily change these facts to make the adventure more easily conform to a forest in your campaign. If you need a reason for the characters to be in the woods, assume that they are returning from a visit to an old friend. Read or paraphrase the following text:

> These woodlands have always been peaceful. Although far from any major cities or civilized areas, the area has long been devoid of monsters. The nearby villages and elven settlements enjoy an existence free from worry.
>
> As you travel through the woods, you notice an unnatural quiet that has settled about the area. This seems abnormal, but not alarming. You pass by a dead bird laying upon the ground. It's after you pass the second dead bird and then the third that you begin to suspect something strange is going on. Ahead, more dead birds litter the ground. The smell of death wafts on the light breeze. The ominous silence completes this disturbing scene.

This particular stretch of woodlands is inhabited primarily by elves, although there are tiny communities of humans scattered about. Dwarves, halflings, and gnomes are uncommon.

Stages 1 and 2

As described above, the woods are filled with dead birds of various types. Examination of the birds reveals that most don't have any visible wounds, except for what one might expect

when birds literally drop out of the sky. A few appear to have burst from the inside. No scavengers or maggots disturb the tiny corpses. Such close examination also shows that the number of dead birds increases in one particularly direction.

If the PCs follow this obvious lead, they notice something new in that direction (north, toward a distant rocky ridge). Spiders crawl amid the dead birds, their numbers growing with the number of dead birds. A successful Knowledge (nature) skill check (DC 15) or a druid's Nature Sense can reveal that these spiders are unnatural. Tiny spikes and hooks cover their abdomens, and their legs are barbed. Most of them are black or red in color.

The spiders crept into the world when a portal to the Abyss opened in the aranea caves just a few days ago. They are natural inhabitants of that evil plane—hence their odd appearance. Further, these spiders are poisonous to eat, and the birds that happily feasted upon the sudden swarm of spiders all died.

Stage 3

Spiders and dead birds still litter the woods. The major difference is that, now quite confident, the drow use the *gate* in the aranea caves to come to the Prime Material world in force. For each half-hour the PCs spend in the woods, there is a 30% chance (01-30 on d%) of encountering a drow raiding party accompanied by some araneas, as described below.

Creatures (EL 14): The drow raiding party consists of four 6th-level fighters, one 5th-level wizard/3rd-level fighter, and three araneas. They wantonly attack anyone they encounter.

Male Drow Ftr6 (4): CR 6; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 6d10; hp 38 each; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+6 magic chainmail, +3 magic shield, +2 Dex); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1/crit 19-20, *+1 short sword*), or +8/+3 ranged (1d4/ crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA drow spell-like abilities; SR 17; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +9, Jump +9, Listen +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Weapon Finesse (short sword), Weapon Focus (short sword).

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): Each usable 1/day and cast as Sor6: *dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire.*

Possessions: +1 mithral chainmail, +1 large shield, +1 short sword, hand crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute; secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes), pouch containing 5 pp and 10 gp.

Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1): CR 8; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 5d4 (Wiz) plus 3d10 (Ftr); hp 33; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 *ring of protection,* +1 *amulet of natural armor,* +2 Dex); Atk +8 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, masterwork short sword), or +8 ranged (1d4/ crit 19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA spells, drow spell-like abilities (as above except cast as Sor8); SR 19; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +5; AL CE; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Animal Handling (monstrous spider) +9, Climb +6, Concentration +8, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Jump +6, Listen +3, Spellcraft +10, Spot +3. *Feats:* Dodge, Improved initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Weapon Finesse (short sword), Weapon Focus (short sword).

Spells (4/4/3/1): 0—*detect magic, ray of frost, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*burning hands, magic missile, mage armor, protection from good;* 2nd—*invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, web;* 3rd—*fireball.*

Possessions: +1 ring of protection, +1 amulet of natural armor, wand of bull's strength (50 charges; command word "Bzactar"), masterwork short sword, masterwork hand crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute; secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes), pouch containing 10 pp, 20 gp, and a 50-gp gem.

Araneas (3): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 19.

Spells (6/6), chosen from the following selection: 0—*arcane mark, detect magic, daze, ghost sound, read magic;* 1st—*charm person, silent image, sleep.*

Infested Cabin

PCs who follow the dead birds and spiders find a small wooden cabin. The spiders swarm particularly thick around the cabin and cover most of the doorway. When the PCs enter the cabin, read or paraphrase the following:

> Inside, the spectre of death hangs thick in the air. A human and half-elf lay dead and bloated within. Spiders swarm over the corpses as well as the rest of the cabin. They've been dead for a few days, but the cause of their death is obvious—hundreds, if not thousands, of tiny bites.

The people were killed by thousands of spiders, most of which have since wandered away. The spiders in the vicinity of the cabin represent but a small fraction of the swarm.

If the PCs continue to follow the path, they head directly toward the ridge in the distance—and the aranea caves.

Development: Although no real description of the surrounding area is provided here, should the PCs travel to local communities to learn more, they discover that while no one seems to know about the dead birds (the area in which they can be found is remote), the locals discuss the sudden disappearance of Alerian, the high priest of Corellon Larethian. No one has any idea what happened to him.

There are no clues to Alerian's disappearance because he was nabbed in his home by *teleporting* demons that grabbed him while he slept and *teleported* away. The kidnapping took mere seconds.

Aranea Caves (Areas A1-A11)

Years ago, a number of aranea colonies joined for mutual benefit to create the extended colony that dwells in these caves. Due to their power, they were even able to forge an alliance with the drow and now work for Laveth.

The caves are natural except in places the aranea have modified them. Stalactites and stalagmites, uneven surfaces, loose stones, and rounded walls are the rule. The floors are no smoother or more flat than the walls or ceiling, even though the caves have been inhabited for years, since the aranea use all surfaces. Surfaces are slick, and all of the caves are damp.

Where not noted in individual room descriptions, ceiling height is approximately one-half the width in any given cave.

Most of the encounters in the caves should prove only moderately challenging to 15th-level PCs. The PCs should be able to make their way through all of the encounters in this section without having to stop to rest. The PCs should at least have a chance to get to the Abyss during Stage 1. Don't worry—the adventure will become challenging enough once the PCs reach the Abyss.

A1. Outside the Caves. The ridge is about 80 feet high and covered in rough brush. The entrance to the cave is difficult to find but lies at the base of the ridge. There are still a few Abyssal spiders roaming about the ridge and the cave entrance, but they are no threat to the PCs.

A large boulder has been positioned in front of a 10-foot-wide cave mouth, concealing the small entrance that remains. Beyond this somewhat hidden entrance, the cave descends sharply down.

While not technically a secret door, the entrance is hidden from view. A successful Search skill check (DC 12) is required to discover it, while an elf character has no trouble finding it.

The aranea rolled the boulder in front of the natural entrance to conceal it, not to block it. The entrance is still 3 feet wide. Medium-size or smaller creatures can fit through easily, and squirmy Large creatures (such as Tyeeinish or a drider) can, too.

A2. Entry Cave.

The irregular walls, stalagmites, and stalactites of this cavern indicate that it is natural. The cave is chill, and a sour smell hangs in the air. The ceiling looms 40 feet above, and water drips slowly somewhere in the distance.

If the PCs have a powerful light source or darkvision, they can make Spot checks (DC 15) to see that the ceiling has eight niches amid the stalactites. The **Creatures** lurk in the niches. The **Trap** is hidden in the middle of the room.

Creatures (EL 10): An aranea hides within each of the eight niches on the ceiling.

Araneas (8): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 19.

Spells (6/6), chosen from the following selection: 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand;* 1st—*chill touch, silent image, ventriloquism.*

Tactics: Each aranea drops a strand of webbing to attempt to snag an intruder. If it makes a successful ranged touch attack with a strand, the aranea then pulls the victim up to the ceiling the following round. Once up at the ceiling, the aranea attempts another ranged touch attack to thrust a web-net around the character and stick him to the ceiling to attack at its leisure. Once one victim is trapped in this way, the aranea drops web nets down on other intruders.

If in trouble, the araneas use their illusions to make it appear or sound as though more of them are coming from the passages, perhaps to lure PCs into the **Trap**. If terribly pressed, the araneas flee to area A3.

Within the niches, the araneas each have half cover.

Trap (EL 5): The central area is surrounded by a trench-like pit 50 feet deep and filled with spikes. Tyeeinish, the aranea leader, used its *silent image* spell to create an illusion over the pit. Any PC falling into the pit not only sustains 5d6 points of damage from the fall but also 1d4+1 individually rolled attacks from the spikes (as daggers, dealing 1d4+5 points of damage each). Each spike that damages a character might inject the victim with aranea poison (DC 13; initial 1d6 temporary Str damage; secondary 2d6 temporary Str damage).

50-foot-deep Spiked Pit (hidden by *silent image*): CR 5; 5d6 points of falling damage and 1d4+1 spikes (+10 melee; 1d4+5/crit 19-20 and poison), successful Reflex saving throw (DC 25) negates; Search (n/a); Disable Device (n/a).

A3. Storage Cave.

Amid the uneven rock formations and stalagmites on the floor of this cave are dark bundles ranging from 4 to 6 feet long. They appear to be wrapped in thick, spidery webbing and anchored amid the rocks.

The bundles are the blood-drained corpses of deer, sheep, cattle, elves, and humans. There are twenty-five corpses in all, six of which are elves and humans. Many have been here for years (for the aranea have been here a long time—and smart enough not to prey upon intelligent creatures except for occasional lone travelers). If searched, the corpses of the humans and elves each have 3d6 gp, but no equipment.

Nothing lives in this cave, although the araneas from area A2 might flee to here.

A4. Shaft Down.

The tunnel ends at the top of a shaft leading straight down into darkness. The roar of running water rises from below.

The 10-foot-diameter shaft descends 100 feet to a tunnel leading to area A5. The tunnel is 6 feet high and contains 4 feet of water, leaving only 2 feet of air above the water line. Water enters this cave via small underground channels from the east and the south. The current is very strong (and the water cold). Even though the depth is not enough to drown most PCs, a PC in the water must make a successful Strength check each round (DC 17) to keep from being knocked off his feet and rushed along with the current to area A5. PCs of Medium-size or larger receive a +4 racial bonus to the Strength check.

A5. Guardians.

The water-filled passage widens into a 50-foot-diameter cave. Water drips from the ceiling in a number of places. The floor rises at the far end of the cave, forming a ledge about 6 inches above the water line.

The water in this cave is 4 feet deep. Even though the depth is not enough to keep characters from wading, a PC in the water must make a successful Strength check each round (DC 13) to keep from being knocked off her feet and rushed along with the current toward the underwater shaft to the southeast. The shaft burrows eastward at a 60-degree angle, drops about 70 feet, and spills into area A8. Once a PC is drawn into the shaft, a successful Swim skill check (DC 18) is needed to keep from being pulled down and dumped into area A8 the following round.

The northern ledge is 25 feet wide. Beyond it, not noticeable from the entrance to the south, is a shaft plunging down 50 feet. At the bottom of this shaft, the passage continues to the north and then turns to the east. Clinging to the top of the shaft are the **Creatures**.

Creatures (EL 11): Four araneas and a 6th-level drider wizard hang on the edge of the shaft. They attack all intruders.

Araneas (4): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 19.

Spells (6/6), chosen from the following selection: 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand;* 1st—*mage armor, magic missile, silent image.*

Drider Wiz6 (1): CR 7; Large Aberration (9 ft. long); HD 6d8+18; hp 45; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.; AC 17 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural); Atk +6 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, masterwork short sword); or +4 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, masterwork short sword), +0 melee (1d4+1 and poison, bite); or +5 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, shortbow); Face 10 ft. × 10 ft.; SA spells, spell-like abilities, poison (DC 16; initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Strength); SR 14; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +14, Concentration +10, Hide +8, Listen +9, Move Silently +5, Spellcraft +10, Spot +9. *Feats:* Ambidexterity, Combat Casting.

Spells (4/4/4/2): 0—*daze, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost;* 1st—*cause fear, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement;* 2nd—*bull's strength, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow, web;* 3rd—*fireball, lightning bolt.*

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): Each usable 1/day (as Sor6): *dancing lights, darkness, detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law, detect magic, faerie fire, levitate.*

Possessions: Masterwork short sword, shortbow, 12 arrows, 12 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute; secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes), pouch containing 30 gp.

Tactics: The guards here attempt to achieve the element of surprise and then attack with ranged attacks. All have cast *mage armor* on themselves (affording them a +4 armor bonus to AC), and the drider has *bull's strength* already cast (adding +4 to its Strength score). Behind the rise they have half cover while they attack.

A6. Tyeeinish's Cave. Show players Illustration #1.

This wide cave has a column of rock supporting its domed ceiling. Dark, web-filled niches dot the walls.

Emerging from around the pillar of rock is gigantic, spidery creature. It is blood red in color, with the head of a horned human, clawed humanlike hands, and batlike wings. It chuckles confidently.

The niches are spider-lairs, although the main inhabitant of this cave actually rests in area A7. This is merely the place where Tyeeinish—the ruler of the aranea—holds court.

Creatures (EL 14): Tyeeinish is a half-demon aranea of abnormal size and great power, with the spellcasting ability of a 9th-level sorcerer. It has led this extended aranea colony since shortly after their allegiance with the drow.

The webbed niches conceal Tyeeinish's six Large Abyssal monstrous spider pets, which emerge to attack intruders!

Tyeeinish, Half-Demon Aranea (1): CR 10; Large Shapechanger (10 ft. long); HD 9d8+36; hp 78; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (average), climb 25 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +1 natural, +2 deflection); Atk +6 melee (1d8 and poison, bite), +2/+2 melee (1d6/1d6, claws); or +6 ranged (web); Face 10 ft. × 10 ft.; SA spells, web, poison (DC 19; initial 1d6 temporary Strength, secondary 2d6 temporary Strength), spell-like abilities; SQ alternate form (spider, humanoid, or hybrid); poison immunity; acid, cold, electricity, and fire resistance 20; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 19, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +15, Concentration +16, Craft (weaving) +16, Escape Artist +16, Jump +15, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Listen

+13, Spellcraft +16, Spot +13. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (bite).

Possessions: +2 ring of protection, wand of fear (45 charges; command word "Thazrut").

Spells (6/7/7/7/5), selected from the following: 0—*dancing lights, daze, detect magic, detect poison, ghost sound, mage hand, ray of frost, resistance;* 1st—*mage armor, magic missile, shield, silent image, ventriloquism;* 2nd—*bull's strength, cat's grace, invisibility;* 3rd—*dispel magic, lightning bolt;* 4th—*stoneskin.*

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): Usable at will: *darkness* 3/day, *desecrate* 1/day, *unholy blight* 1/day, *poison* 3/day, *contagion* 1/day.

Large Abyssal Monstrous Spiders (6): hp 27 each; see area **D11a** for full statistics.

Tactics: Tyeeinish sends the spiders into battle immediately. If it knew the PCs were coming, it has already cast *mage armor, bull's strength, cat's grace,* and *stoneskin* on itself. It tries to drive off as many PCs as it can with its *wand of fear* and then pick off the rest with spells (like *lightning bolt*). The pillar affords it half cover. In melee, Tyeeinish attacks with its poisonous bite and claws, using *poison* spells to increase the claws' lethality. If reduced to half hit points, Tyeeinish turns *invisible* and flees to area **A8** to alert the demons there.

A7. Web Lair.

This floor of this cave is lost somewhere in darkness far below. The entire cave is filled with thick webs, and in three places scattered around the perimeter, indiscernible things are wrapped in cocoonlike sacks.

The cave floor is 100 feet deep. The sacks each hold more than one hundred aranea eggs.

Treasure: At the bottom of the cave, wrapped in spider silk, Tyeeinish has stashed some treasure collected over the years. It includes a coffer with 240 gp, 10 loose gems (50 gp each), a jeweled bracelet (100 gp), and a *potion of darkvision.*

A8. Demons at Rest. Only use the read-aloud text if the PCs have somehow managed to reach this room without alerting its inhabitants:

Within this cave you hear a loud roar and feel the spray of cold water. A single column connects the floor and ceiling just north of a pool that spans the glistening cave. The water issues from a 5-foot-diameter hole 3 feet up the western wall and disappears through a low, partially submerged channel to the east. Four or five figures in silhouette—some of them quite large—lurk by the south shore.

The pool in this room is filled by the rushing torrent that spills out of the hole in the west wall that leads up to area **A5**. The water collects in the pool, but then empties out of another hole leading eastward. The water runs underground for miles to a large lake.

If the PCs can see the **Creatures** gathered on the south shore, show the players Illustration #2.

Creatures (EL 18): A hezrou, its succubus servant, and a vrock converse with a drow cleric by the water. These are demonic emissaries from Laveth herself, sent to oversee the capture of Alerian, the elf cleric. Their work completed, they now relax by the water. The drow is Ilvadidra, a 9th-cleric of Laveth. She commands the demons to attack immediately.

Ssoril, Hezrou (1): hp 67; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Chazyk, Vrock (1): hp 60; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Alysthene, Succubus (1): hp 33; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Ilvadidra, Female Drow Clrg (Laveth): CR 9; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); hp 44; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+6 magical chainmail, +4 Dex); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d8+1, heavy mace), or +11/+6 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA spells, spell-like abilities; SR 20; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 9.

Skills: Concentration +10, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Spellcraft +10, Listen +8, Spot +14. *Feats:* Alertness, Weapon Focus (hand crossbow), Precise Shot, Point Blank Shot.

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): Each usable 1/day, as a Sorg: *dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire.*

Possessions: +1 mithral chainmail, wand of dispel magic (12 charges, command word "Urgothab"), heavy mace, hand crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing 25 pp and 10 gp.

Spells (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/2+1/1+1): 0—*cure minor wounds* (×3), *detect magic, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*bless, cure light wounds, doom, obscuring mist, protection from good*, summon monster I;* 2nd—*bull's strength* (×2), *cure moderate wounds, hold person* (×2), *shatter*;* 3rd—*bestow curse, contagion*, cure serious wounds, deeper darkness, dispel magic;* 4th—*cure critical wounds, greater magic weapon, unholy blight*;* 5th—*greater command, circle of doom*.*

* Domain spells. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day; +4 attack bonus, +9 damage bonus), Evil (cast evil spells as Clr10).

Tactics: The succubus uses her *charm* and *suggestion* abilities to subdue and confuse as many of the PCs as possible. The vrock casts *mirror image* and swoops into battle. The hezrou hangs back and uses its spell-like abilities like *chaos hammer* and *unholy blight* to attack from a range for as long as possible. If either the vrock or the succubus are defeated, the hezrou tries to summon another of its kind. In melee, it uses its *blink* ability.

Ilvadidra attempts to use her spells to aid the demons. She casts *bless, bull's strength* on the vrock and hezrou, and general healing and dispelling (or counterspelling) to help her side to victory. If seriously threatened, she calls out for reinforcements from area **A11**.

Development: If Ilvadidra survives, she accompanies Laveth to the Harrowing Ritual in Stage 3.

A9. Another Web Lair.

Three columns of rock rise up from the cave floor. Beyond them, the cave is filled with a mesh of webs, from floor to ceiling. The air in this cave is stifling and rank.

A number of aranea that the PCs have most likely already encountered dwell in the webs beyond the columns. Unless some of the aranea from areas **A1** and **A5** survived and fled to this cave, the chamber is currently unoccupied.

Treasure: Hidden within the webs are two spider-silk bags. The first bag contains 12 50-gp gems, 200 gp, 780 sp, a *potion of cat's grace,* and a *potion of cure serious wounds.* The second bag contains 260 gp, 600 sp, and a *potion of protection from elements (sonic).*

A10. The Gate. Show the players Illustration #3.

The north end of the cave is filled with a web-structure with a round aperture centered between the east and west walls, 2 feet off the ground. This hole in space is 10 feet wide and leads into a starry, black void.

The permanent, magical *gate* leads to the Demonweb, Lolth's domain in the Abyss. Those who pass through the *gate* arrive in area **D1**. These webs are magical and indestructible. The *gate* can only be damaged after Laveth's four power receptacles (see below) are destroyed. After that, the webs burn or can be hacked down easily, wrecking the *gate* forever.

Stages 1 and 2

Lurking behind the *gate* is the **Creature.**

Creature (EL 9): A bebilith hides in the webs behind the *gate.* It remains hidden, but if any PC investigates the area in which it hides, the bebilith attacks. The creature works for Lolth directly, sent to destroy the demons in the Demonweb disloyal to her. When the fighting in the Demonweb broke out, the bebilith slipped through the *gate* to wait out the battle. Once over, it moves back in.

Bebilith (1): hp 118; *Monster Manual* 41-46 (demon).

Stage 3

If the bebilith is still alive in Stage 3, it moves through the *gate* and into the Demonweb, occupying any empty chamber (either area **D1** or a room cleared by the actions of the PCs).

A11. Drow Garrison.

This set of caves appears lived in by something other than the spidery beasts seen earlier. Fairly new-looking beds, small trunks, and some throw rugs are scattered throughout the caverns. A long tapestry hangs on the far south wall depicting a beautiful drow woman with extra, spidery eyes on the sides of her head astride a massive spider with cleavers for legs.

The drow sent by Laveth use these caverns as a base. They now consider this to be a permanent garrison through which they hope to launch raids against the forest outside, once their numbers grow.

Creatures (EL 15): The drow stationed here include seven 6th-level drow fighters and two 5th-level wizards/3rd-level fighters. They all serve Laveth rather than Lolth.

Male Drow Ftr6 (7): hp 38 each; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (2): hp 33 each; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

In addition to his regular equipment, the first wizard wields a *wand of magic missiles* (7th-level caster; 50 charges; command word "Oortal"). The second wizard also has a *necklace of fireballs* (Type IV).

Treasure: Behind the tapestry is a small shelf set into the cave wall. Here, the drow keep a small treasury and supply stash. Two locked and trapped iron boxes contain 200 pp each. (The nature of the **Trap** is explained below.) Hidden by a false stone panel at the back of the shelf, requiring a successful

Drow

Drow have the following spell-like abilities, usable once a day as sorcerers equal to their character level: *dancing lights, darkness,* and *faerie fire.* Drow have spell resistance equal to 11 plus their class level. They receive a +2 racial bonus to Will saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities.

Drow possess darkvision with a range of 120 feet. Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or a *daylight* spell) blinds them for 1 round. In addition to temporary blindness, drow suffer a -1 circumstance penalty to all attack rolls, saves, and checks while operating in bright light.

In every other way, drow should be treated as elves.

Drow clerics worshiping either Lolth or Laveth can choose from the Chaos, Destruction, or Evil domains.

Further, drow and drow equipment from the Demonweb possess these traits:

- Drow from the Demonweb have the option to take a skill called Handle Monstrous Spider that functions just like Handle Animal but works on Abyssal monstrous spiders (and only on Abyssal spiders, since unlike normal vermin they have an Intelligence score of 3).
- All drow from the Demonweb have the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow).
- All drow weapons and equipment found in this adventure, both magical and mundane, are ornately decorated with images of spiders, webs, leering demonic faces, bat wings, or (rarely) skulls.

What the Drow Know

Drow loyal to Laveth know of her entire basic plan—capture a good cleric for sacrifice, gather her four power receptacles, and perform the Harrowing ritual. Drow loyal to Lolth, unless specifically stated otherwise, know nothing of Laveth's plan—only that the Demonweb is or was under attack by slaadi. If loyalty is not mentioned, in this adventure, assume the drow are loyal to Laveth.

Laveth's Symbol

Laveth doesn't allow many to bear her symbol, first because she's trying to keep a low profile to further her plans, and second because she uses it as a sort of pass to get into restricted or important places. Therefore, only her most favored servants bear them. In this adventure, that includes Ilvadidra, Realthican, Tudrii, Helcav, and Eaman.

Characters examining Laveth's spider-shaped symbol might assume that it represents Lolth, but any PC who makes a successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 18) notes the symbol is actually different. Laveth's symbol shows the silhouette of slender woman with four extra spidery appendages coming out of her sides. No knowledge check is able to identify the symbol—Laveth has remained an utter secret for anyone to have any knowledge about her. A successful Knowledge (outer planes) skill check (DC 35), however, indicates that the PC knows that Lolth has sired children with drow and demons. Don't allow a player to attempt such a check unless he or she brings up that line of inquiry.

Search skill check (DC 18) to locate, are three potions and two scrolls. The potions are *cure moderate wounds, minor restoration,* and *spider climb.* One scroll is divine and has the following spells scribed upon it (cast at 12th level): *remove curse, restoration,* and *heal.* The other is arcane and has the spells *see invisibility, summon monster III,* and *fly* (cast at 7th level).

Trap (EL 4 per box): The iron boxes are each rigged with a needle trap that pricks the finger of the opener. The needle is coated with terinav root contact poison (DC 16; initial 1d6 temporary Dexterity damage, secondary 2d6 temporary Dexterity damage).

Poisoned Needle: CR 4; 1 point of damage and poison (see above), Reflex saving throw (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 21).

Development: If sounds of combat or some other disturbance comes from area **A8** or **A9**, the drow here respond in 1d4+2 rounds. They obey the commands of Ilvadidra without hesitation.

Demonweb (Areas D1-D19)

The Demonweb is a layer of the Abyss, a plane of evil and chaos. It is the home of many spiders, drow, and demons. Below the Demonweb, in chasms sunken within absolute darkness, lie the dreaded Demonweb Pits.

The maps and text for this adventure detail only a portion of the Demonweb and the Demonweb Pits. This portion of the Demonweb is made of thick, magical webbing, sometimes forming passageways and other times forming a vast web. (See the "Dungeon Features" sidebar for details on the webs and web passages.) Throughout the web, various structures hang amid the strands, as though caught in the web's snare. This is more true than one might think, for the nature of the magic of the web creates random portals throughout the planes, drawing in buildings, structures, and ships. The inhabitants then incorporate the structures into the web.

Dungeon Features

Unless otherwise noted, all doors are unlocked, simple, wooden doors (Break DC 13; Hardness 5; hp 5). Unless noted otherwise, ceilings are 15 feet high.

Magic Conditions

The Demonweb alters magic and bends other aspects of reality. While in the Demonweb, Evil or Chaotic spells function as if cast by a caster of twice the normal level. *Web* spells spread out to fill twice the area that they normally would. The DC of the *poison* spell increases by 3. *Spider climb* lasts twice as long, as does any spell that summons any type of vermin.

Healing

Evil creatures in the Demonweb heal at twice the normal rate.

Pathways

Most of the pathways in the Demonweb are round tubes made of extra-tough webbing. The webbing is only slightly adhesive—enough to feel strange but not enough to hinder movement. Climbing the side of a web passage has a base DC of 10.

The webbing is immune to fire, cold, and electricity, has a Hardness of 10, and 20 hp.

If a character cuts through the webbing, he can crawl out of the pathway. The outer surface is stickier than the inside. A Strength check (DC 15) is required to move across its surface. The area around the detailed areas on the map is a black void filled with strands of webbing in all directions—including up and down. Due to the webs, visibility is reduced to about 100 feet. PCs who leave the pathway (or leave from one of the open areas such as area **D10**) can fly or transport themselves however they wish. A character could, for example, fly from area **D10** to area **D9** or even **D14b** without difficulty. Most areas can be easily reached only by the web pathways, however. PCs who fall off the web plunge 10d100 feet before hitting a web strand and becoming caught. Luckily, the web takes most of the impact, and the PC takes only 1d6 points of damage per 100 feet fallen.

Should the PCs leave the map, they find nothing but what seems to be an endless web, unless you want to create other encounter areas. The Demonweb is a very big place, and Lolth herself maintains a lair at its center.

D1. Arrival. The following description assumes that the PCs pass through the *gate* in the Aranea Caves (area **A10**):

> You feel at first yanked forward into a swirling void, racing at incredible speeds, then pushed even faster toward a light-devouring blotch of space. Then you are standing still.
>
> Around you is a chamber constructed of some strange, smooth material. Something within its surface seems to shift and writhe, but the room feels perfectly stable. The chamber is 30 feet square with a corridor fashioned from thick web strands leading out from one corner. The air has an abrasive quality. From far off, you hear a chitinous clicking.

Use the following text to describe the web passage:

> Anchored to the edges of the room's exit are thick strands of webbing. The webs form a round tunnel with walls so thick that they appear not only opaque but quite sturdy. The passage twists and turns so that its length can't be determined.

Show the players Illustration #4 at this time.

If examined closely, faces contorted in pain writhe within the floor, ceiling, and walls. Although they resemble people trapped behind glass, pressed up against its surface, they are actually souls of the damned trapped within a nameless Abyssal substance with a hardness of 50 and 200 hp.

The *gate* back to the Aranea Caves appears as a 10-foot-diameter, freestanding ring of black light in the corner opposite the web passage. PCs stepping through emerge in area **A10**.

Creatures (EL 14): If a section of the wall is broken, recast, disintegrated, or passed through (via *passwall, ethereal jaunt,* or some other spell), ten spectres are released and attack anyone nearby until they are turned or destroyed. These spectres are just like normal spectres, but infused with chaos—and thus chaotic in alignment.

Chaos Spectres (10): CR 7; Medium-Size Undead (incorporeal); HD 7d12; hp 45 each; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (good); AC 15 (+3 Dex, +2 deflection); Atk +6 melee (1d8 and energy drain, incorporeal touch); SA energy drain (2 negative levels), create spawn; SQ undead, incorporeal, +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura, sunlight powerlessness; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7; Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +13, Intimidate +12, Intuit Direction +10, Listen +13, Search +10, Spot +13. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative.

D2. Nexus. Use the following read-aloud text during Stage 1 of the adventure:

> Ahead, several web passages meet to form a nexus or crossroads. Where they meet, two hulking toadlike humanoids hang from the webs. One has reddish skin covering its bulbous, warty body and appears to have been hacked with blades. The other is entwined in webbing and has blue flesh and a slightly more lanky form. Vile black ichor and crimson blood stain the webs.

These dead slaadi have no treasure or equipment. The crimson blood belongs to the drow who fought against these creatures and ultimately prevailed.

Stages 2 and 3

> Ahead, several web passages meet to form a nexus or crossroads. Faint traces of black ichor and crimson blood stain the webs where the passages intersect.

The slaadi corpses are gone, devoured by other creatures that lurk in the Demonweb.

D3. Drow Complex. The doors here are made of strong wood and barred, except for the door between areas **D3a** and **D3b**, which has no bar. The walls are stone.

Strong Wooden Door, Barred: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break DC 20.

D3a. Drow Defenders. This encounter changes depending on when the PCs arrive.

Stage 1

> Beyond the door lies a 30-foot by 40-foot room furnished with five beds, five trunks, a large table, ten chairs, a couch, and a long bookcase. Five dark elves with chainmail armor, short swords, and shields struggle here against three green-skinned humanoids and two similar creatures with blue skin.

The slaadi entered through area **D3b**. There are three red and two blue slaadi fighting four 6th-level drow fighters and a drow sergeant (5th-level wizard/3rd-level fighter). The arrival of the PCs doesn't stop the battle, but the blue slaadi call out (in Common) for the PCs' help.

Creatures (EL 14): If the PCs aid the slaadi, together they almost certainly overwhelm the drow. Immediately afterward, the insanely chaotic slaadi attack the PCs. Even without the PCs' help, the slaadi will almost certainly defeat the drow, after which they attack the PCs no matter what.

Male Drow Ftr6 (4): hp 25 each (38 at full); see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1): hp 16 (33 at full); see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Blue Slaadi (2): hp 49 each; *Monster Manual* 166.

Green Slaadi (3): hp 55 each; *Monster Manual* 166.

Random Encounters

In the Web

While exploring the web passages or the areas trapped within the Demonweb, use the following table, rolling 1d20 once per hour.

1-3	1 Huge Monstrous Spider (EL 4)
4-6	3 Driders (EL 10)
7-9	4 6th-level Drow Fighters (EL 10)
10-12	2 Red Slaadi (EL 9)
13-20	No Encounter

Outside the Web

Should characters explore areas off the map or the strands between the passages, use the following encounter table, rolling 1d20 once per hour:

1-2	Corpse in the webbing (25% chance for a minor magic item)
3-4	2 Vrocks (EL 15)
5-7	1 Colossal Monstrous Spider (EL 10)
8-10	1 Gargantuan Monstrous Spider (EL 7)
11-12	3 Succubi (EL 12)
13-20	No Encounter

Treasure: The five trunks are unlocked and contain drow clothing sewn with 2d6 small gems worth 50 gp each. The bookshelf holds several mundane tomes plus a spellbook with a cover made from cornugon hide and pages made of dried webbing. It contains all of the spells the drow sergeant normally prepares.

Development: If the battle continues 5 rounds after the PCs first arrive, Tarestique from area **D3c** comes to the drow's aid if she is able and alive. If it does not continue that long, she remains in her chamber.

Stage 2

> Beyond the door lies a 30-foot by 40-foot room furnished with five beds, five trunks, a large table, ten chairs, a couch, and a long bookcase. Five dark elves with chainmail armor, short swords, and ornate shields struggle against a hulking humanoid frog with warty red skin, thrashing against the chains that currently bind it.

Since Stage 1, the drow defenders gained reinforcements and managed to capture a red slaad. Their hands full, they pay little heed to the PCs unless they are directly attacked.

Creatures (EL 12): The drow force consists of four 6th-level fighters and a 5th-level wizard/3rd-level fighter.

Male Drow Ftr6 (4): hp 29 each (38 at full); see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1): hp 33; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Red Slaad (1): hp 37; *Monster Manual* 166.

Tactics: The slaad tried to summon another of its kind and failed; it cannot attempt another summons for an hour. While chained, it cannot use its pounce attack.

Treasure: See Stage 1 above.

Stage 3

This 30-foot by 40-foot room is furnished with five beds, five trunks, a large table, ten chairs, a couch, and a long bookcase. Five dark elves leap to their feet and grab for their weapons.

Creatures (EL 12): The drow are resting and unprepared for battle unless the PCs made a great deal of noise as they approached the room or they hear the call from Tarestique in area **D3c**. The drow force consists of four 6th-level fighters and a sergeant (5th-level wizard/3rd-level fighter).

Male Drow Ftr6 (4): hp 38 each; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1): hp 16 (33 at full); see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

D3b. Room in Disarray.

This appears to be a training room, with targets on the walls, racks of weapons, wrestling mats, and sparring dummies. Much of room lies in disarray, however, with weapons spilled from the racks and the dummies knocked over.

The battle between the slaadi and the drow upset the contents of this room. The weapons include short swords and shortspears. Near the web passage is a barrel with 100 hand crossbow bolts in it.

Note that the door into area **D3c** is trapped (see below).

D3c. Priestess's Chamber. The door to this room is trapped (see **Trap** below).

Beyond the door lies a lavish, sprawling suite with a huge bed suspended by chains affixed to the ceiling. The bed hangs 3 feet off the floor. Two tall wardrobes, a chest, three long couches, four ornately embroidered chairs, and three low tables fill the rest of the room. Paintings with a heavy use of black and red cover the walls, and a red rug covers the 20-foot by 20-foot area in the middle of the room. In the far right corner, a small shrine sits upon a low stand. A large bejeweled spider crouches in the middle of the shrine. In the near left corner, three monstrous spiders squat motionless, and four elves—beaten, bruised and clad in rags—dangle from shackles on the wall near them.

Trap (EL 2): The door to this room is trapped with a *glyph of warding* cast at 9th level that deals 4d8 points of sonic damage. If activated, Tarestique hears the noise and readies herself as best she can (see **Tactics** below).

Sonic *Glyph of Warding:* CR 2; 5-foot radius, 4d8 points of sonic damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 17) halves damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Creatures (EL 12): Tarestique is a 10th-level cleric of Lolth and second-in-command under Countess Ullistrin, serving as Captain of the Guard. In Stage 1, she's preparing to go help the others fight the slaadi. In Stages 2 and 3, she simply rests. In stage 2, she has used some spells (*bane, cure serious wounds, magic vestment, spell immunity*).

The three Large Abyssal monstrous spiders obey Tarestique's every command. The elves chained to the wall are 1st-level commoner slaves (hp 0 each, 1d4 at full). If freed, these slaves are able to do little, since they are beaten and malnourished. If healed, they're eager to exact revenge against the drow but probably not powerful enough to actually provide much help.

Tarestique, Female Drow Clr10 (Lolth): CR 10; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 10d8; hp 50; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+8 armor &t shield, +3 Dex); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d8+5, *+3 heavy mace*); or +10/+5 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA spells, spell-like abilities; SR 21; AL CE; SV Fort +9 (with Great Fortitude feat), Ref +8 (with Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +11; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +10, Handle Monstrous Spider +4, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +3, Listen +7, Spellcraft +3. *Feats:* Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility.

Spells (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1): 0—*cure minor wounds* (×3), *detect magic, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*bane, bless, command, cure light wounds, doom, protection from good*;* 2nd—*bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, endurance, hold person* (×2), *shatter*;* 3rd—*cure serious wounds, dispel magic, magic circle against good*, magic vestment, protection from elements;* 4th—*cure critical wounds, greater magic weapon, spell immunity, summon monster IV, unholy blight*;* 5th—*circle of doom*, ethereal jaunt, slay living.*

* Domain spells. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day; +4 attack bonus, +10 damage bonus), Evil (cast evil spells as Clr11).

Possessions: +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 large steel shield, +3 heavy mace, ioun stone (vibrant purple prism storing these spells, cast at 10th-level: *cure serious wounds, silence*), symbol of Lolth, hand crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute, secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes), pouch containing 25 pp and 10 gp.

Large Abyssal Monstrous Spiders (3): hp 30 each; consult area **D11a** for complete statistics.

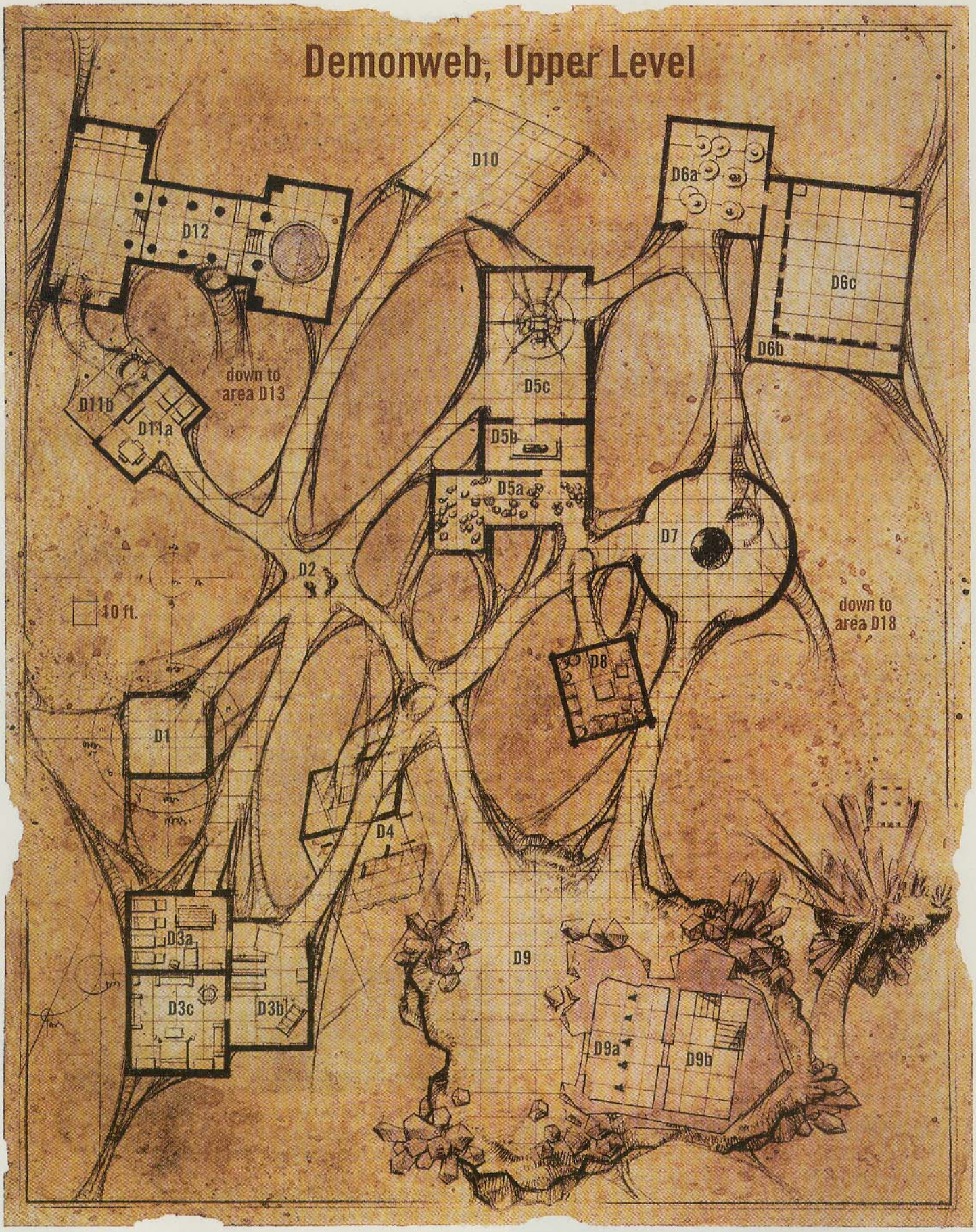
Tactics: For each round that Tarestique has to ready herself for combat, she casts a spell. (In Stage 1, she's already cast the first two.) In order, she casts *spell immunity (magic missile), magic vestment, greater magic weapon, summon monster IV,* and *bless.* If she still has time, she casts *bull's strength* and *endurance* on one of her spiders. She uses the spiders to attack intruders while she casts offensive spells like *slay living* and *unholy blight,* until she has to melee with her foes.

Treasure: The onyx statue of Lolth (the spider in the shrine) is worth 1,000 gp due the jewels and the workmanship. It is, however, cursed. Any PC of non-evil alignment who touches it and fails a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) loses 1 point of Strength per week. This is a permanent drain. A *remove curse* spell cast by a 20th-level cleric negates the effect.

The wardrobes contain clothing, perfumes, and personal items. The chest, which is locked (Open Lock DC 25), holds still more clothing, blankets, a whip, a pair of manacles, a spyglass, three *potions of cure moderate wounds,* a scroll of *raise dead,* a bag containing 100 10-gp gems, and a small coin purse filled with 50 pp.

The paintings on the walls are disturbing abstracts painted by Tarestique that have no value.

Development: During Stage 2 or 3, Tarestique can call for aid from area **D3a**. If the drow in **D3a** are still alive, they arrive in 2 rounds. In Stage 1, she knows that the drow in area **D3a** are busy fighting and uses *ethereal jaunt* to escape the room. If she gets away, she joins Countess Ullistrin wherever she can currently be found (probably area **D5** or **D6**).


Demonweb, Upper Level
D10
D6a
D12
D6c
D6b
down to
area D13
D11b
D11a
D5c
D5b
D5a
D7
D2
40 ft.
down to
area D18
D8
D1
D4
D3a
D9
D3c
D3b
D9a
D9b

D4. Demonroost.

The web passage, angling downward, ends in a flat surface with a corroded bronze trapdoor set into it. A large pull-ring connected to a stylized demon's head is set into the middle of the square portal.

The trapdoor is neither locked nor trapped and pulls open easily. Read or paraphrase the following boxed text if the PCs peer into the room below:

Below the trapdoor, a dimly lit room extends below. The room is 30 feet across and wide, and 60 feet below you see murky water. You cannot discern the floor of the chamber through the water. Positioned about the walls are rusty iron bars that jut out to form perches throughout the room. Four vulturelike humanoid creatures rest upon these perches, their dark feathered wings wrapped around their twisted, muscular bodies.

The pool at the bottom of this shaftlike room is 30 feet deep and filled with the bones (broken, with the marrow sucked out) of countless victims of the **Creatures** in this room, as well as bits of armor and broken equipment.

Creatures (EL 18): The four vulturelike creatures are vrocks. They attack as soon as they are aware of intruders. A hezrou waits in the water, hiding just below the surface.

Vrock (4): hp 65, 63, 60, 54; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Hezrou (1): hp 72; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Tactics: The vrocks attempt to grab characters and hurl them down into the water below, where the hezrou attacks them in the dark water. If all the PCs end up in the water, the vrocks aren't afraid to swoop down into it to press their attack. If one or more vrocks dies, the others attempt to summon more.

Treasure: Scattered amid the thousands of bones and other refuse at the bottom of the pool are 10,543 gp, 5,390 sp, and a *minor ring of elemental resistance (electricity).*

D5. Countess Ullistrin's Chambers. This set of rooms serves as home to Countess Ullistrin, a drow noble cursed (or as she sees it, blessed) with vampirism and selected by Lolth to watch over and command this portion of the Demonweb.

Countess Ullistrin fights first against the slaadi and then against the traitorous drow who side with Laveth. Knowing all about Laveth's attempts at insurrection, she wonders why Lolth has not yet intervened. Should the PCs manage to reason with her, she might temporarily ally with them. Should this happen, Ullistrin tells the PCs about Laveth and the receptacles, although she doesn't know the details of the Harrowing ritual. She knows that one of Laveth's receptacles lies in area D18c and another in the Demonweb Pits, where Laveth seems to spend a lot of time. Eventually, Ullistrin will betray the PCs and attempt to slay them.

D5a. The Endless Gala.

The grisly remains of hundreds of humans, elves, dwarves, halflings, and gnomes fill this room. The dry, standing husks have been arranged in poses and held aloft by some cruel spell. Each corpse is dressed in finery and elegant clothing, creating the illusion of a lavish party.

Ullistrin enjoys taking some of her favorite victims, once they are completely drained of blood and life, and posing them in this room. Fighting in this crowded room is difficult, and all attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty. Creatures attempting to hide among the corpses gain one-half concealment (20% miss chance), but the dry, brittle bodies offer no real cover as missiles and blows pass through them.

Stage 1

Moving invisibly through Ullistrin's "gala" are two gray slaadi. Although invisible, they occasionally nudge the corpses, allowing PCs a Spot skill check (opposed by the slaadi's Hide skill checks) to notice them. If the slaadi's *invisibility* spells are penetrated or dispelled, read or paraphrase the following description:

Prowling among and occasionally disturbing the corpses are two toadlike figures, gaunt and angular. The first one has light-gray skin and wide-set eyes and carries a scepterlike rod. The other has charcoal-gray skin and a writhing mass of snakes atop its broad head.

Show the players Illustration #5 when the characters are close enough to see the slaadi.

Creatures (EL 12): The gray slaadi, Skaelur and Vhaag, have recently made their way into this room. They attack anything that gets in their way, including the PCs.

Skaelur and Vhaag, Gray Slaadi: hp 75 each; *MM* 166.

SA—Keen Eyesight (Ex): Skaelur's wide-set eyes give him a +4 racial bonus to Spot skill checks.

SA—Poison (Ex): Vhaag has venomous snake hair, giving him an additional attack at +14 melee (1d4 plus poison, bite); Fortitude save (DC 24); initial damage 1d6 temporary Strength, secondary damage 2d6 temporary Strength.

Possessions: Rod of rulership (see **Treasure** below).

Tactics: Skaelur tries to use the *rod of rulership* on the PCs, compelling them to help find and kill drow. (If this command is contrary to the nature of a PC, the rod's hold over that PC is broken instantly.) Only PCs with an Intelligence score of 12 or higher can resist the rod's effect (Will saving throw DC 16).

Treasure: Skaelur wields a *rod of rulership* (100 minutes of power remaining) stolen from another part of the Demonweb. He also has a leather bag slung over his shoulder, inside which he keeps the following treasure: 54 pp, a gold ring (taken from a drow) with a small ruby (worth 120 gp), and a silver and gold statuette of a spider (worth 300 gp).

Stage 2

Standing amid the corpses, two toadlike figures, gaunt and angular, watch as six dark elf soldiers rush into the room from the other entrance to confront them. One of the toadthings has light-gray skin. wide-set eyes. and a scepterlike rod in one claw. The other has charcoal gray skin and a writhing mass of snakes atop its broad head.

Creatures (EL 14): The six drow are guards attempting to drive the slaadi off. Each is a 6th-level fighter. In Stage 1, they are found in area D5c. The slaadi (and their treasure) are discussed above.

Male Drow Ftr6 (6): hp 38 each; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Tactics: The drow attack all intruders (slaadi and PCs). The slaadi fight against the drow first, and then turn against the PCs. Once the drow are defeated, the slaadi can be convinced to leave the PCs alone with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 18). In such a situation, the slaadi leave the room and move back into the web passages. Treat them as result "13-15" on the Random Encounter tables.

Stage 3

Six drow guards stand amid the corpses. They wear chain shirts and carry hand crossbows, short swords, and shields.

Creatures (EL 12): The 6th-level drow fighters stand guard in the room and attack the PCs on sight.

Male Drow Ftr6 (6): hp 38 each; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

D5b. Countess Ullistrin's Resting Place.

This quiet chamber is empty save for a stone sarcophagus in the center engraved with drow symbols and images—spiders, demonic faces, and webs. A thick, heavy lid rests atop it.

Show players Illustration #6 if the characters inspect the sarcophagus. Among the various images carved into the sarcophagus are the words "Countess Ullistrin, at rest but never at peace" written in Drow. Opening the sarcophagus requires a successful Strength check (DC 22).

Creature (EL 15 if Ullistrin is present): The countess lies in her sarcophagus only in Stage 2, but even then if threatened she flees immediately (possibly in *gaseous form*) to area **D6c**. The Countess maintains this room as her crypt but rests as infrequently as possible.

Treasure: The silk padded interior of the sarcophagus hides a small, air-tight compartment detectable only with a successful Search skill check (DC 25). It is locked, requiring a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 20) to pick, and trapped (see **Trap** below). Tucked within the compartment, Ullistrin keeps a *wand of blur* (25 charges), a bag of 350 gp, a jeweled scepter (worth 1,000 gp), and *crystal ball.*

Trap (EL 4): Opening the secret compartment in Ullistrin's sarcophagus releases a 30-foot-square cloud of poison gas. There is no way to detect the gas until the compartment is opened, and no way to open the compartment without releasing the poison gas.

Poison Gas: CR 4; Fortitude save (DC 22) negates; initial 1d6 points of temporary Strength, secondary 2d4 points of temporary Strength.

D5c. Audience Chamber.

A tall throne fashioned from bones rests atop a 2-foot-high, 10-foot-diameter circular platform, radiating from which are eight gigantic, wrought-iron spider legs.

The "throne of bones" is magical, protecting anyone sitting in it with a shimmering energy shield that provides SR 20 and a +5 armor bonus.

Trap (EL 2): The throne is rigged with a special magical trap. In anyone other than Ullistrin so much as touches the throne, they must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 20) or suffer a -4 morale penalty to any saving throws made against attacks and effects produced by Ullistrin. Further, Ullistrin's personal rune is invisibly imprinted on the victim (similar to an *arcane mark*) so that Ullistrin can identify the individual on sight.

Stage 1

Six drow guards stand watch around the throne. They wear chain shirts and carry hand crossbows, short swords, and large shields adorned with weblike patterns.

The drow guards are detailed under **Creatures** below.

Creatures (EL 13): Six drow guards stand watch here. In Stage 1 they do not leave this room, but in Stages 2 and 3 they move to area **D5a**. If combat erupts, one of the guards sits on the throne, uses its protective capabilities, and fires his crossbow while the others rush forward to attack.

Male Drow Ftr6 (6): hp 38 each; see "A Walk in the Woods" section for full statistics.

Stages 2 and 3
No one is in the room.

D6. Countess Ullistrin's Court. These rooms serve Ullistrin as a redoubt. The walls, floors, and ceilings are identical in every way to those in area **D1** (that is, composed of imprisoned souls).

D6a. Outer Chamber.

This large chamber contains eight 10-foot-diameter floating disks. Six of them float about 12 feet above the floor, spaced equidistantly about the room. Two float only 10 feet below the ceiling which looms nearly 30 feet above the floor. The disks glisten like polished bronze, giving off a faint hum. The underside of each disk has an elaborate and grotesque image of a leering, contorted elvish (or perhaps drowic) face. A single drow stands atop each of the six lower disks. The room reeks of heavy, cloying incense.

PCs who make a successful Spot skill check (DC 10) quickly realize that the figures atop the disks are, in fact, bronze statues. The statues atop the six lowest platforms (three females and three males) are dressed regally and sculpted beautifully. The two uppermost platforms hold no statues. One supports a long, bronze-topped wooden desk filled with various papers and files covered with drow writing. This is Vagdrioth's desk, but the drow wizard is so chaotic that the papers and files really only make sense to him. At best, someone else reading them can determine that they deal with drow personnel management, agreements written with demons, tallies of food supplies, and other administrative information. On either side of the desk, Vagdrioth keeps a brazier of incense burning, issuing forth wisps of herbal smoke.

The final floating platform is covered in cushions. This is Vagdrioth's "home," but he spends little time there and keeps no belongings about.

Creature (EL 12, if Vagdrioth is present): Vagdrioth, Ullistrin's consort and advisor, occasionally spends time here. If alerted to danger (automatically true in Stage 1, true in Stages 2 and 3 if there's been fighting in areas **D5c**, **D7** or **D10**, or if Ullistrin

or Tarestique has come here to tell him of trouble), he retreats to area **D6b**. See below for Vagdrioth's statistics.

D6b. Trapped Hall. This L-shaped corridor has two magical traps (see **Trap #1** and **Trap #2** below). The walls and floors of the passage are carved with spiderlike frescoes, strange symbols, and weblike patterns.

The L-shaped corridor has nine peepholes, enabling the occupants of area **D6c** to watch the progress of any intruders coming down the hall, allowing them time to prepare. Characters trying to peer through the peepholes into area **D6c** can make a Spot skill check (DC 30) to see its occupants.

Trap #1 (EL 8): The first trap lies just beyond the door from area **D6a**. The first PC stepping into the 10 foot cube beyond that door activates a special *symbol* placed in that area. The PC must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 21) or be instantly *disintegrated*.

Symbol of Disintegration: CR 8; *disintegrates* target, successful Fortitude save (DC 22) results in 5d6 points of damage instead; Search (DC 33); Disable Device (DC 33).

Trap #2 (EL 7): The door leading into this room is trapped with a powerful *glyph of warding*. If the door is touched by anyone not stating the password ("the Countess is beautiful"), the entire L-shaped passage is filled with a firestorm that deals 12d8 points of damage, with a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 24) reducing the damage by half.

Improved Glyph of Warding: CR 7; 12d8 points of fire damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 24) halves damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

D6c. Render's Den.

This 40-foot-high, vaulted chamber is mostly empty. Only a pair of pedestals, 3 feet wide and 2 feet high, furnish the room. One stands in each of the two far corners. Between them, a tall, gray-skinned, bipedal beast with long claws and terrible teeth stands ready to rend flesh and bone.

Creatures (EL see below): It's likely that the PCs will have their final confrontation with Ullistrin and Vagdrioth here. They both fight to the death from atop the pedestals. A particularly large gray render is always in this room and serves both of them faithfully.

The Encounter Level varies depending on which creatures are present. Use the following chart to determine the EL:

Creatures Present	EL
Gray Render	8
Gray Render and Vagdrioth	14
Gray Render and Ullistrin	17
Gray Render, Ullistrin, and Vagdrioth	19

Ullistrin, Female Drow Vampire Clr11 (Lolth)/Rog2: CR 15; Medium-Size Undead (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 13d12; hp 113; Init +10 (+6 Dex, +4 Improved initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 36 (+9 armor &t shield, *+1 ring of protection*, +6 Dex, +6 natural armor); Atk +14/+9 melee (1d6+5 plus energy drain, unarmed strike); or +15/+10 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA sneak attack (+1d6), energy drain (2 negative levels), *domination*, blood drain, children of the night, spells, drow spell-like abilities; SD evasion, damage reduction 15/+1, cold and electricity resistance 20, *gaseous form* at will, *spider climb* at will, *polymorph self* (into bat, dire bat, wolf, or dire wolf), fast healing 3; SR 24; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +12 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +12; Str 20, Dex 22, Con –, Int 12, Wis 20, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +16, Concentration +14, Hide +18, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +17, Move Silently +18, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +15, Spot +15. *Feats:* Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Improved Critical (slam), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Sunder.

SA–Domination (Su): Any PC targeted by Ullistrin's gaze must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 19) or fall instantly under her influence, as the *dominate person* spell cast at 12th-level of ability. This ability has a range of 30 feet.

SA–Blood Drain (Ex): Ullistrin must make a successful grapple check to pin her victim. She then drinks the victim's blood, draining 1d4 points of permanent Constitution each round until the pin is broken.

SA–Children of the Night (Su): Ullistrin can call forth a pack of 4d8 dire rats, a swarm of 10d10 bats, or a pack of 3d6 wolves as a standard action once/day. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Ullistrin for up to 1 hour.

Possessions: +2 mithral chain shirt, +1 large shield, symbol of Lolth, hand crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute, secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes).

Spells (6/7+1/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1): 0–*detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds* (×3), *resistance;* 1st–*bane, bless, command, doom, inflict light wounds* (×2), *protection from good*, summon monster I;* 2nd–*bull's strength* (×2), *endurance, hold person* (×2), *shatter*;* 3rd–*blindness/deafness, dispel magic, inflict serious wounds, invisibility purge, magic circle against good*, protection from elements;* 4th–*inflict critical wounds, death ward, greater magic weapon, spell immunity, unholy blight*;* 5th–*circle of doom*, flame strike, slay living, summon monster V;* 6th–*blade barrier, harm**.

* Indicates domain spells. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day; +4 attack bonus, +11 damage bonus), Evil (casts evil spells at 12th level).

Vagdrioth, Male Drow Wiz12: CR 12; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 12d4+9 (includes Toughness feats); hp 46; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (*+2 ring of protection, +2 amulet of natural armor*, +3 Dex); Atk +5/+0 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); or +9/+4 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, masterwork hand crossbow); SA spells, *permanent see invisibility*, spell-like abilities; SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Alchemy +10, Concentration +15, Handle Monstrous Spider +9, Hide +6, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +7, Move Silently +9, Scry +19, Search +7, Spellcraft +13, Spot +7. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Craft Staff, Great Fortitude, Scribe Scroll, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Toughness (×3).

Spells (4/5/5/5/4/3/2): 0–*detect magic, flare, read magic, resistance;* 1st–*charm person, grease, mage armor, magic missile, shield;* 2nd–*blur, cat's grace, fog cloud, Melf's acid arrow, web;* 3rd–*dispel magic, fly, lightning bolt* (×3); 4th–*dimension door, ice storm, improved invisibility, stoneskin;* 5th–*cone of cold, dismissal, wall of force;* 6th–*disintegrate, summon monster V.*

Possessions: +2 ring of protection, +2 amulet of natural armor, figurines of wondrous power (ivory goats), scrolls (*clairaudience/clairvoyance, mirror image, suggestion*), *potion*

of endurance, symbol of Lolth, dagger, masterwork hand crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute, secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes), pouch containing 10 pp and 20 gp.

Gray Render (1): hp 159; *Monster Manual* 112.

Tactics: When preparing for combat, Ullistrin casts the following spells, one per round, in this order (for as many rounds as she has to prepare): *blade barrier* on the section of the room nearest the door, *death ward* (on Vagdrioth), *greater magic weapon* (on herself), *endurance* (on the gray render), and *bull's strength* (on herself).

Meanwhile, Vagdrioth casts these spells, one per round, in this order: *improved invisibility* (around himself), *stoneskin* (on himself), *cat's grace* (on himself), and *bull's strength* (on the gray render). If they need to buy more preparation time, he casts *wall of force* to block off the attacker's progress.

During the battle, Ullistrin uses her spells to heal herself (*inflict wounds spells* heal instead of harm her), casting attack spells like *slay living, flame strike, circle of doom,* and *harm* upon as many foes as she can. If she notices that any of the intruders have been affected by the trap on her throne (see area **D5c**), she focuses her *domination* ability on them. She'll resort to physical combat but only as a last resort. Vagdrioth uses his best attack spells (*ice storm, cone of cold, disintegrate*) first—he doesn't hold back. He disdains physical combat but does whatever he can to aid Ullistrin.

D7. Yurganthaor's Lair.

A circular room about 60 feet in diameter lies at the end of the web passage. The domed ceiling rises 35 feet. In the middle of the room, a 15-foot diameter black sphere floats 10 feet above the floor. A 10-foot wide hole cuts through the floor off to one side.

Show players Illustration #7. The black globe is an energy construct used by this area's inhabitant, Yurganthaor, as a bed. He can phase into the globe and then curl up within it to rest or hide. If Yurganthaor wills it, the black globe has a Hardness of 20 and 150 hp. If he is slain, the black globe disappears. Barring *teleport* spells or similar magic, there is no way to enter the sphere.

The hole leads down to a shaftlike web passage. Anyone climbing down this passage reaches area **D18a**.

Creature (EL 16): Yurganthaor is a nalfeshnee demon. During Stages 1 and 2, he is invisible. During Stage 3, he is invisible only when he knows danger is coming.

Yurganthaor, Nalfeshnee: hp 103; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Tactics: The nalfeshnee uses his *summon tanar'ri* ability to make sure that his foes have something other than himself to confront directly while he casts spells. If threatened, he hides within the black globe.

Treasure: Inside the black globe, Yurganthaor keeps his treasure—scattered and loose—including 1,320 gp, four 50-gp gems, and three arcane scrolls (*wall of fire, telekinesis,* and *dimensional anchor*) cast at 12th level. If the globe disappears, the treasures fall to the floor.

D8. Upper Chamber. The sharply angled passage leads up to an unlocked wooden trapdoor.

Stages 1 and 3

Beyond the trapdoor, a 30-foot-square room made entirely of thick wooden logs holds crates, barrels and sacks.

This room is empty except for the mundane supplies and food stored here. Unless the PCs are interested in bales of cloth, ingots of iron, barrels of water and wine, and sacks of grain and vegetables, they find nothing of interest here. This highly defensible room, however, might make a good place to rest if they need it.

Stage 2

Six blue slaadi lurk here. They are further described under **Creatures** below.

Creatures (EL 13): After facing a number of defeats at the hands of drow and demons, these slaadi have taken to resting here. They pile crates and barrels atop the trapdoor; a successful Strength check (DC 22) is required to open it. As soon as the trapdoor opens, the slaadi attack, concentrating their attacks on the first character up, hoping to take him down before another character climbs in. In this way, they attempt to take out their foes one at a time.

One blue slaad has small, vestigial wings. Another is so dark as to seem more black than blue.

Blue Slaadi (6): hp 60 each; *Monster Manual* 166.

Development: With all the power being thrown around in this room in the fight, it's possible that the entire room and its contents might be destroyed, if not severely damaged. The walls, floor and ceiling have 30 hp and a Hardness of 5.

D9. Crystal Tower of the Yochlol. This large chunk of rock, plucked from another plane by powerful magic, materialized in the Abyss and eventually became caught in the Demonweb. The chunk has a number of huge crystal shards growing up from its rocky core. Rising up from this chunk is a tower made of purple crystal that stands over 100 feet tall. It serves as a fortress for the handmaidens of Lolth, the yochlol. The evil yochlol maintain fortresses throughout the Demonweb, of which the tower is but one.

The tower is lustrous and smooth, but with jagged edges. It has a Hardness of 20 and 50 hp. The entire tower, including floors and interior walls, are shaped from purplish crystal. The doors are made of glistening steel. Area **D9d** has a balcony, and areas **D9e** and **D9f** have windows made from thin sheets of the crystal (Hardness 20, 25 hp each).

Show players Illustration #8 when the PCs first behold the tower of the yochlol.

D9a. Defenses. A pair of unlocked crystal doors open into this large room comprising about half of the tower's first level. A steel door is set into the opposite wall of the room.

The walls and floor here are well-polished stone. Five ornate, metallic dragon heads, each about 3 feet long and 1 foot wide, sit upon the floor, spaced about 10 feet apart. Each head is a different color; from left to right, they are red, black, white, blue, and green.

Trap (EL 9): The dragons' heads are a part of an elaborate magical trap. If someone enters the tower without stating

"Lolth is master of the this tower," one dragon head rises up on a foot-wide shaft about 6 feet in the air, turns toward the intruder, and breathes an attack similar to a dragon of that color. The heads attack in this order: red, black, white, blue, and green. Each head can breathe once per round, so if more than five intruders move through the room in a single round, the sixth intruder—and those after him—are not attacked. If intruders remain in the room a second round, the heads attack, although no single PC is ever attacked by more than one head in a round. These attacks are 5-foot-wide stream effects that affect only a single target.

Red Dragon Head: CR 5; 10d6 points of fire damage, Reflex save (DC 20) halves damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

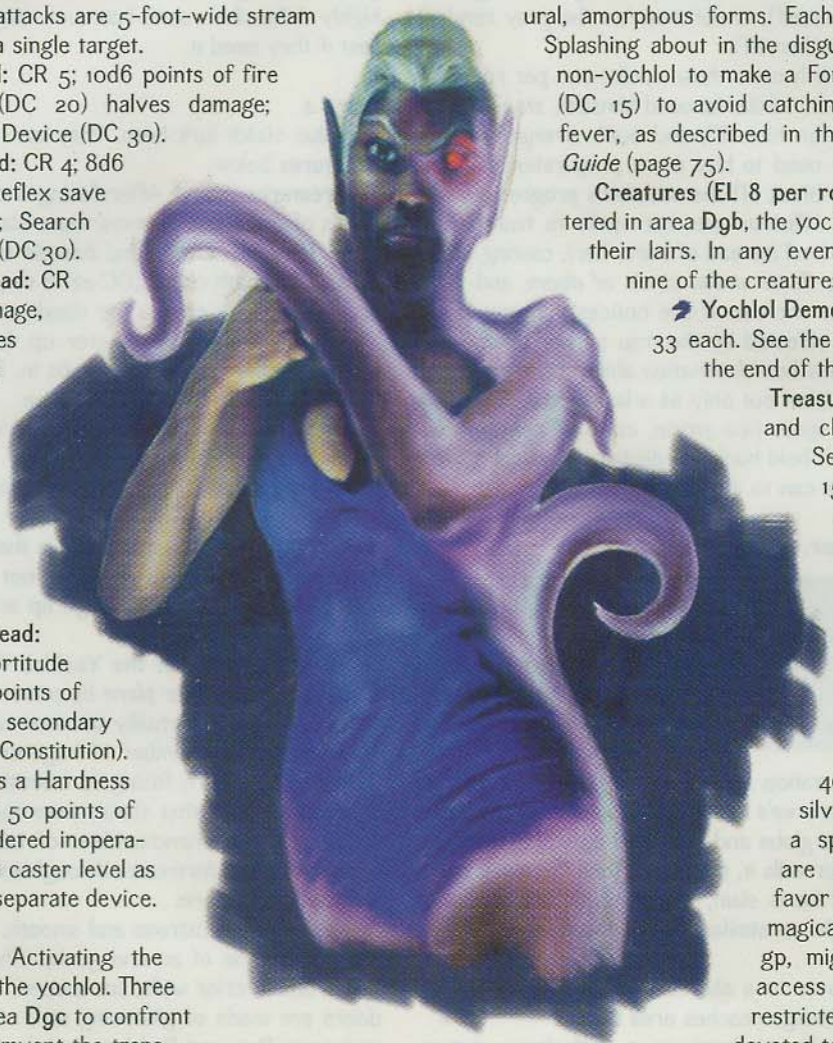
Black Dragon Head: CR 4; 8d6 points of acid damage, Reflex save (DC 20) halves damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

White Dragon Head: CR 4; 7d6 points of cold damage, Reflex save (DC 20) halves damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

Blue Dragon Head: CR 5; 9d6 points of lightning damage, Reflex save (DC 20) halves damage; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 30).

Green Dragon Head: CR 5; contact poison (Fortitude save DC 20; initial 2d6 points of temporary Constitution, secondary 2d6 points of temporary Constitution).

Each dragon head has a Hardness of 15 and can withstand 50 points of damage before it is rendered inoperable. If *dispelled*, treat the caster level as 15th and each head as a separate device.



Dgb. Guard Chamber. Activating the traps in area **Dga** alerts the yochlol. Three yochlol descend from area **Dgc** to confront PCs who defeat or circumvent the traps.

One yochlol dons the form of a striking drow maiden in spidersilk robes and stands at the foot of the staircase leading up into the tower. The other two yochlol wait invisibly in their amorphous forms by the door.

The walls of this room are covered with bas-reliefs of monstrous spiders menacing victims caught in gigantic webs.

Creatures (EL 8): The yochlol in drow form greets the PCs, saying "Do not fear. You are safe here." This is merely a prelude to an attempt to *charm* the PCs (see **Tactics** below).

Yochlol Demons (3): hp 33 each; see "Yochlol" sidebar at the end of the adventure.

Tactics: The visible yochlol attempts to *charm* or *dominate* as many of the PCs as it can. The other two take ready actions to attack anything that looks like it might attack the visible one. In battle, the yochlol use their *gaseous form* ability to reposition themselves and then renew attack in amorphous form.

Dgc. Yochlol Lair. There are three of these locations in the tower. Each chamber is the home of three yochlol.

> This chamber has three sunken pits filled with a strange brine that gives off a pungent odor. The corners of the room are filled with cobwebs, and a normal-sized black spider scurries across the floor.

The yochlol rest in the briny pits when in their natural, amorphous forms. Each pit is 2 feet deep. Splashing about in the disgusting brine forces a non-yochlol to make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15) to avoid catching a disease—demon fever, as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 75).

Creatures (EL 8 per room): If not encountered in area **Dgb**, the yochlol are likely to be in their lairs. In any event, there are exactly nine of the creatures in the tower.

Yochlol Demons (3 per room): hp 33 each. See the "Yochlol" sidebar at the end of the adventure.

Treasure: The brine is thick and cloudy. If successful Search skill check (DC 15) reveals a small steel box in each pit. Each box is locked and trapped (see **Trap** below). Each yochlol keeps its personal belongings inside its box, including 1d4 gems (worth 50 gp each), 4d10 pp, and a small silver brooch depicting a spider. The brooches are symbols of Lolth's favor and, although nonmagical and worth only 5 gp, might gain the wearer access to areas usually restricted to drow or demons devoted to Lolth. (Although not particularly useful in this adventure, these passes might be useful in later adventures dealing with the drow if you so desire.)

Trap (EL 2 per box): Each of the boxes found in the yochlol pits is rigged with a *fire trap* spell cast at 9th-level of ability.

***Fire-trapped* Box:** CR 2; 5-foot radius; 1d4+9 points of damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 15) halves damage; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29).

Development: The yochlol are surprisingly organized and quick to aid one another. Thus, if a yochlol is attacked in the tower, the remaining eight yochlol come to her aid as quickly as possible. It's not inconceivable that the PCs might end up fighting all nine yochlol at once, in which case treat the battle as a single EL 11 encounter. If the yochlol fare poorly against the PCs, they might also receive aid from Nulise and Bloodlust, her fiendish raven companion (see area **Dgd** below).

D9d. Balcony.

This room opens on three sides onto a balcony with an iron railing running around it. The balcony overlooks the rocky island and the innumerable web strands affixed to it. A drow woman in full-plate with a two-bladed sword stands on the balcony, peering over the web. A large black raven with red, glowing eyes perches next to her.

Creatures (EL 14): The drow is Nulise, a blackguard. She is devoted to Lolth and has been sent here by the demon goddess to determine whether there are traitors among the yochlol. For now, the yochlol keep up appearances for Nulise's sake. If she ever found out about the yochlol's disloyalty, she would attack them, even before fighting against any intruders (like the PCs). The fiendish raven is Nulise's servant, Bloodlust.

Nulise, Female Drow Ftr7/Blk6: CR 13; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 7d10+7 (Ftr) plus 6d10+6 (Blk); hp 91; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+10 armor, *+1 ring of protection, +1 amulet of natural armor,* +2 Dex); Atk+19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+9/crit 17-20, *+2 two-bladed sword*), +19 melee (1d8+9/crit 19-20, *+2 two-bladed sword*); or +15/+10/+5 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA spells, drow spell-like abilities, smite good (1/day; +2 attack bonus and +6 damage bonus to good-aligned target), aura of despair (all enemies within 10 feet suffer a -2 morale penalty to saves), sneak attack (+1d6), poison use; SR 24; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills: Climb +13, Hide +8, Intimidate +8, Listen +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Ambidexterity, Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Great Cleave, Improved Critical, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

Blackguard Spells (2/2/1): 1st—*cause fear, cure light wounds;* 2nd—*death knell, summon monster II;* 3rd—*cure serious wounds.*

Possessions: +2 mithral plate armor, +1 ring of defection, +1 amulet of natural armor, +2 two-bladed sword (both blades are magical), *+4 belt of giant strength,* symbol of Lolth, hand crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing 15 pp and 40 gp.

Bloodlust, Nulise's Fiendish Servant Raven: CR 2; Tiny Animal (2-ft. wingspan); HD 4d8; hp 18; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 17 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural armor); Atk +5 melee (1, claw); Face 2½ ft. × 2½ ft.; Reach 0 ft.; SA share spells; SQ improved evasion; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7.

Tactics: Nulise can heal herself with her spells. Otherwise, she attacks in a mostly straightforward manner. She fights to keep her raven servant from harm, but she won't sacrifice herself for it.

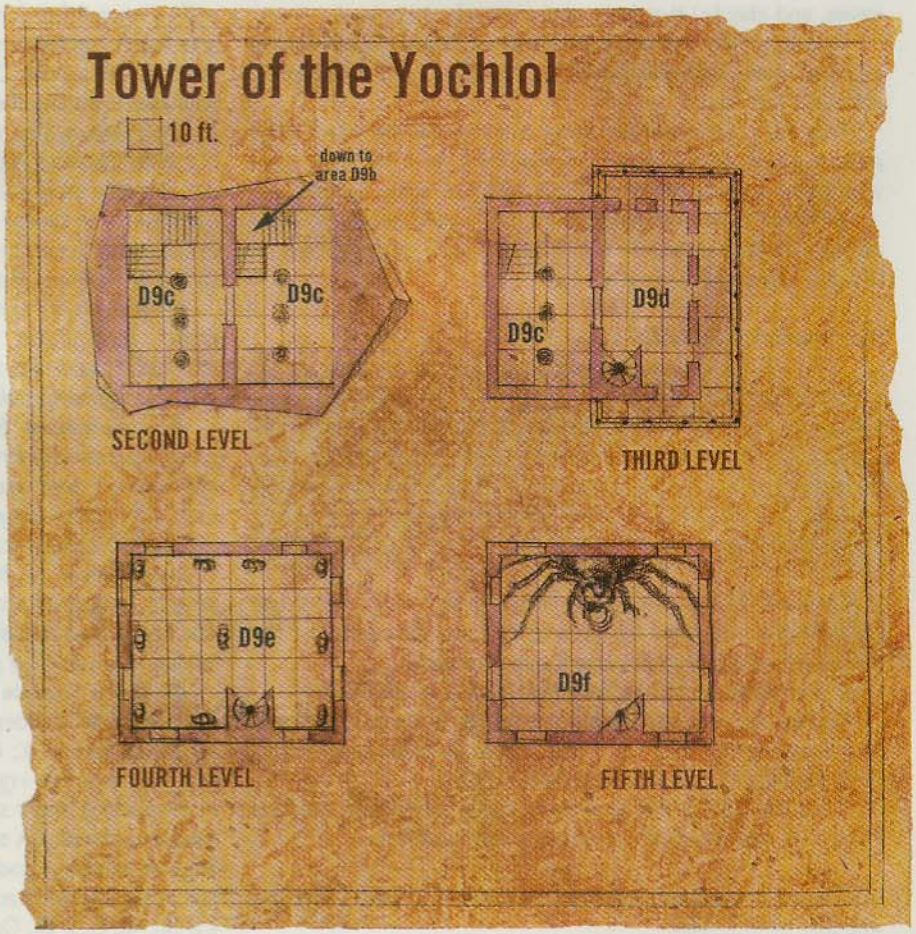
Development: If the yochlol think that the PCs can defeat Nulise, they won't help her. If the PCs are already weakened, the yochlol do help Nulise, attempting to show their loyalty to Lolth by helping her emissary. Conversely, Nulise assumes that the yochlol can repel or defeat any intruders; if the yochlol are fighting a losing battle, Nulise comes to their aid.

D9e. Obsidian Queens.

Ten statues decorate this chamber, all depicting beautiful, noble-looking drow females. All of the statues are carved from seamless, polished obsidian.

Each statue is indeed life-sized and carved from polished obsidian. The statue in the center of the room is hollow and has a secret latch requiring a successful Search skill check (DC 15) to locate. Lifting the latch causes the statue's right and left halves to part, revealing an interior compartment containing the **Treasure.** Lowering the latch causes the halves to merge, reforming the statue.

Treasure: Floating inside the hollow drow statue is one of Laveth's four power receptacles: an oblong, faceted green gem with an apparent value of 5,000 gp. The gem is held aloft by a *permanent levitate* spell that dispels once the gem is removed from the statue interior.



Dgf. Shrine of Lolth.

Reaching out from the darkness is a gigantic spider with the head and arms of a beautiful but terrible dark elven woman. The creature glistens as though wet and makes grinding and creaking noises as it moves. To either side of her stands a tall brazier, and before her rests a wide brass bowl with brownish stains at the bottom. A curved silver knife lies in front of the bowl.

Despite their ultimate treachery, the yochlol maintain this shrine to Lolth to keep up appearances. The 10-foot-high, 12-foot-wide animated statue of Lolth is made of steel but painted with great skill to add realism. The magic that causes it to move is programmed to make the statue lunge menacingly at anyone peering through the door. The statue cannot attack, does not move to defend itself if struck, and is extremely resilient (Hardness 15, 500 hp).

Each brazier contains a block of incense. If burned, the statue moves to a relaxed, regal pose in between them, looking down into the 5 foot diameter bowl and then at anyone in the room. The statue expects a blood sacrifice. If blood is placed with the bowl, the statue holds forth its elvish arms and its eyes blow with a violet color. Anyone in the chamber is affected by a special *bless* spell that lasts for 24 hours.

If characters fail to burn the incense within 5 rounds of entering the room, the construct screams and holds its arms forward. All within the room must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 20) or suffer a powerful curse (-1 to all attacks, saves, and checks) that lasts until magically *removed*.

Treasure: The animated statue of Lolth has rubies for its two main eyes, each worth 500 gp. Removing either, however, activates the **Trap**.

Trap (EL 5 per eye): Removing an eye from the statue triggers a *glyph of warding* that manifests as a horrible, gut-wrenching scream and deals 10d8 points of sonic damage.

Sonic *Glyph of Warding* (2): CR 5; 10d8 points of sonic damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 21) halves damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

D10. Nightmare Assassin.

The web passage opens and becomes a flat, open platform anchored by a number of strands of the Demonweb. At the center of this rusty iron platform stands a 15-foot-diameter spidery creature, with each end of its four front legs ending in a bloody, cleaverlike blade. The grisly remains of creatures lie about it, hacked to bits.

Creature (EL 10): The spidery creature is a retriever. It has been assigned to guard this area against any intruders and has destroyed a pair of green slaadi that attacked it.

Retriever (1): hp 55; *Monster Manual* 41-46 (demon).

Tactics: On the first round, the retriever uses its fire and electricity rays on the PCs. It then closes to melee range, ruthlessly slashing PCs with its cleaverlike blades.

Treasure: One of the dead slaadi has a leather bag in which it kept two potions (*bull's strength* and *invisibility*).

D11. Laveth's Guards. This brick building was pulled into the web just months ago.

D11a. Arachnemancer and Rogue.

This long room is furnished with a pair of beds, some chairs, two wooden wardrobes, a pair of trunks, and a long table covered with dirty dishes and used utensils.

Stages 1 and 2

Standing in the room, ready for action, is a drow male with long robes covered in embroidered web patterns and random jewels set to look like spiders. His flesh is scarred in a weblike pattern as well.

A successful Spot skill check (DC 27) reveals a drow woman in chainmail with a short sword hiding just inside the doorway. If the PCs fail to detect her, she gains a partial-action surprise round in which to strike.

Creatures (EL 17): These drow are agents of Laveth. The male, Realthican, is an arachnemancer (see "Arachnemancer" sidebar). He has two Abyssal monstrous spider companions. The female drow, Tudrii, is a half-demon rogue/fighter. Although they serve primarily as guards to keep intruders (including drow and demons loyal to Lolth) away from the temple (area D12), both serve Laveth as aides and advisors.

Realthican, Male Drow Wiz6/Arachnemancer6: CR 12; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 6d4-6 (Wiz) plus 6d6-6 (Arachnemancer); hp 22; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (*+2 bracers of armor, +2 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection,* +2 Dex); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6, quarterstaff); or +9/+4 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA spells, poison touch, spiderform (Tiny to Huge in size), drow spell-like abilities; SR 23; AL CE; SV Fort +3 (+9 vs. poison), Ref +11 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +7; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 8, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +7, Concentration +14, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (nature) +11, Handle Animal (monstrous spider) +14, Spellcraft +14, Listen +8. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Extend Spell, Heighten Spell, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (Conjuration).

Wizard Spells (4/4/4/3): 0—*detect magic, flare, ray of frost*, read magic;* 1st—*magic missile* (x2), *shield, summon monster I*;* 2nd—*blur, invisibility, levitate, Melf's acid arrow*;* 3rd—*fly, lightning bolt, summon monster III*.*

Arachnemancer Spells (3/3/3/1): 1st—*cause fear, spider climb, summon spider I*;* 2nd—*summon spider II*, summon spider swarm*, web;* 3rd—*poison, summon monstrous spider III** (x2); 4th—*spider plague**. Spells marked with an asterisk are enhanced by Realthican's Spell Focus feat.

Possessions: +2 bracers of armor, +2 amulet of natural armor, +1 ring of protection, ring of mind shielding, cloak of arachnida, quarterstaff, hand crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing 15 pp and 40 gp.

Tudrii, Female Drow Half-Demon Rog6/Ftr6: CR 12; Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil) (5 ft. 3 in. tall); hp 75; Init +6 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 29 (+11 magic armor &t shield, +2 natural, +6 Dex); Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+4 plus special/crit 17-20, *+1 keen shock short sword*); or +16/+11 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA sneak attack (+3d6), spell-like abilities; SQ evasion; uncanny dodge; poison immunity; cold, fire, lightning, and acid resistance 20; SR 23; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +12, Handle Monstrous Spider +10, Jump +12, Swim +12, Bluff +10, Disable Device +15, Hide +15, Listen +8, Move Silently +15, Open Locks +15, Pick Pockets +15, Search +11, Spot +8, Tumble +15. *Feats:* Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Expertise, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Whirlwind Attack.

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): At will—*dancing lights* 1/day, *faerie fire* 1/day, *darkness* 4/day, *desecrate* 1/day, *unholy blight* 1/day, *poison* 3/day, *contagion* 1/day, *blasphemy* 1/day.

Possessions: +2 mithral chainmail, +2 large steel shield, +1 keen shock short sword (deals +1d6 points of electrical damage per attack), masterwork hand crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 doses of sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute, secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes), pouch containing 15 pp and 40 gp.

Large Abyssal Monstrous Spiders (2): CR 3; Large Vermin (10 ft. long); HD 4d8+4; hp 28 each; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d8+3 and poison, bite); Face 10 ft. × 10 ft.; SA poison (DC 16; initial and secondary 1d6 temporary Strength), web (Escape DC 26; Break DC 32; hp 12); smite good (usable 1/day; +4 damage bonus); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; cold and fire resistance 10; damage reduction 5/+1; SR 8; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +14, Hide +6, Jump +2, Spot +7.

Tactics: If prepared, Realthican casts *spider climb* on Tudrii and *shield* on himself. In any event, Realthican sends his spider companions (and summons more, if necessary) to strategic areas in the room so that Tudrii is sure to flank opponents as she confronts them, and also so that intruders can't use area effect spells with efficiency. If pressed, both drow retreat to area **D11b**, using the webs to reach area **D12**.

Treasure: The wardrobes contain clothing and personal effects. The two trunks are locked and require a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 20) to pick. Each trunk contains 4d10 pp and 2d6 100-gp gems in a small leather bag. Tudrii's trunk also contains a jeweled mirror (worth 1,000 gp). Realthican's trunk also contains three potions (*cure serious wounds, fly,* and *lesser restoration*).

Stage 3
Realthican and Tudrii, if alive, are at the Harrowing Ritual. See area **P4** for details.

D11b. Open Platform.

Suspended by thick webbing behind the brick building is a wooden platform. A hole has been cut in the platform, with a connected web passage dropping to somewhere far below.

There is nothing of interest here. The web passage descends to area **D12**.

D12. Temple of Laveth. Only servants of Laveth are permitted to enter this area. Those bearing Laveth's secret symbol (see "The Drow" sidebar for details) are allowed to pass through the temple and descend to the lower level of the Demonweb. All others are driven off or slain.

Dead silence hangs like a pall over this grand chamber. Pillars line the path toward the head of the chamber. Each pillar is a work of exquisite craftsmanship, displaying an intricate web pattern with a demonic, leering face at the top where the pillar meets the ceiling. At the end of this row of pillars, a shallow pool, 20 feet across, contains transparent liquid, possibly water.

On the wall behind the pool is a painted mural depicting the face, shoulders, and arms of a beautiful but angry drow woman. In each hand she grasps a green gem as large as an apple, with power oozing forth from it and dripping down to her feet like glowing, emerald-colored blood.

This entire chamber is filled with a permanent *antimagic field* with the exception of the cylindrical area defined by the pool. Magic functions normally within the area bound by the floor and ceiling within the pool's circumference. The pool is 1 foot deep and is described under **Trap** below. As soon as the PCs enter the temple, the **Creatures** begin to appear.

Two web passages lead away from the temple: One leads up to area **D11b**, while the other descends to area **D13a** on the next level. The driders do not follow the PCs if they leave the room through either exit.

The mural beyond the pool depicts Laveth clutching a pair of crystal receptacles. These are merely depictions of the receptacles etched in stone, not the receptacles themselves.

Trap (EL 7): The water in the pool radiates strong Enchantment [Compulsion] magic. Each round the water is touched by a non-evil living creature, the creature must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 17) or take 1d3 points of temporary Wisdom damage and be stunned for 1 round. If a character loses more

than one-half his total Wisdom score in this manner, a successful Will saving throw (DC 20) is needed to resist being *dominated* by Laveth. Mental contact with Laveth is established no matter where she is, and she instantly knows the location of the enslaved character, sees what he sees, and knows what he knows until the *domination* is broken by means of a successful *dispel magic*; the dispel check is made against DC 28.

Creatures (EL 14): As soon as any unauthorized intrusion occurs in this temple (someone enters whom Laveth wouldn't want), a drider materializes in the pool, summoned by magic. Each round thereafter, for as long as the intruders remain, another drider appears in the pool. This continues until the intruders leave or ten driders appear. (Even if the PCs enter, leave and enter again, no more than ten driders can be summoned by the pool.)

When the driders start to appear, show Illustration #9 to the players.

The driders know about the *antimagic field* and so use their spells only to protect themselves within the confines of the pool. They prefer to make ranged attacks. If more than six driders are the pool at any one time, the most recently arrived leave the pool to attack with swords.

Driders (10): hp 45 each; see area A5 for statistics.

Development: If Realthican and Tudrii flee to this area, Tudrii stays to fight the PCs. Realthican, knowing his spells are useless here, flees to area **D13a**.

D13a. Helcav and Friend.

The walls of this room are covered in relief sculptures of humanoids riding dragons fighting demons. In many spots, the humanoids have been defaced.

Stage 1 and 2

Standing in the middle of this room, as if waiting for you, is a drow male with a spider tattoo on his forehead. He wears black and dark violet robes. Behind him, a dark-skinned humanoid stands in the shadows.

This building was brought to the Demonweb long ago. The local residents—specifically demons—found the relief offensive (the humans on dragons were depicted as defeating the fiends) and so defaced it.

Creatures (EL 15): The robed figure is Helcav, another drow loyal to Laveth. Helcav is not eager to engage in combat and offers the PCs one chance to return whence they came. If the PCs challenge him, Helcav instructs Oliclin to step forward and threaten the PCs with its death gaze. If that's not enough to drive away the heroes, Helcav prepares for battle as outlined in the **Tactics** section below.

Oliclin is a bodak, twisted and maligned by the evil energies of the Abyss. It serves Helcav and does as he commands.

Helcav, Male Drow Wiz14: CR 14; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 14d4+9 (includes Toughness feats); hp 48; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (*+2 ring of protection, +2 amulet of natural armor,* +2 Dex); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); SA spells, *permanent protection from arrows* (damage reduction 10/+3 against ranged weapons), drow spell-like abilities; SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +14; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Alchemy +10, Concentration +17, Handle Monstrous Spider +18, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Listen +8, Search +4, Spellcraft +18, Spot +5. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (hand crossbow), Great Fortitude, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Evocation), Toughness (×3).

Spells (4/5/5/5/4/3/3/2): 0—*detect magic, flare, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*charm person, mage armor, magic missile, shield, shocking grasp;* 2nd—*cat's grace, Melf's acid arrow, endurance, invisibility, levitate;* 3rd—*blink, dispel magic, fireball, haste, lightning bolt;* 4th—*dimension door, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, stoneskin;* 5th—*cone of cold, dismissal, wall of force;* 6th—*disintegrate, repulsion, summon monster V;* 7th—*limited wish,* quickened *lightning bolt.*

Possessions: +2 ring of protection, +2 amulet of natural armor, rod of viscid globs (12 charges; see "New Magic Items" sidebar), *goggles of minute seeing, +4 cloak of resistance* (already factored into Helcav's saving throws), three scrolls *(improved invisibility, polymorph other, summon monster IV),* two potions *(blur, see invisibility),* dagger, pouch containing 10 pp and 20 gp, steel key to chest in area **D13a**.

Oliclin, Bodak (1): hp 58; *Monster Manual* 27.

Tactics: If threatened, Helcav casts *wall of force* to protect himself (but not Oliclin). From behind it, he casts (in this order) *improved invisibility, endurance, mage armor, minor globe of invulnerability,* and *stoneskin.* To hold foes at bay, he'll use *repulsion.* Once in combat, he opens up with his *ice storm* and quickened *lightning bolt* all at once, followed by *disintegrate, dismissal,* and *monster summoning V.* If sorely wounded, Helcav uses *limited wish* to fully heal himself.

Note that Helcav has a *permanent protection from arrows* spell cast upon him. If Helcav *dismisses* a PC, assume that character appears just outside the Aranea Caves.

The bodak does not use sophisticated combat tactics. First it tries to catch PCs with its death gaze, then slams opponents.

Stage 3

Helcav, if alive, is attending the Harrowing Ritual in area **P4**. Oliclin remains here no matter what.

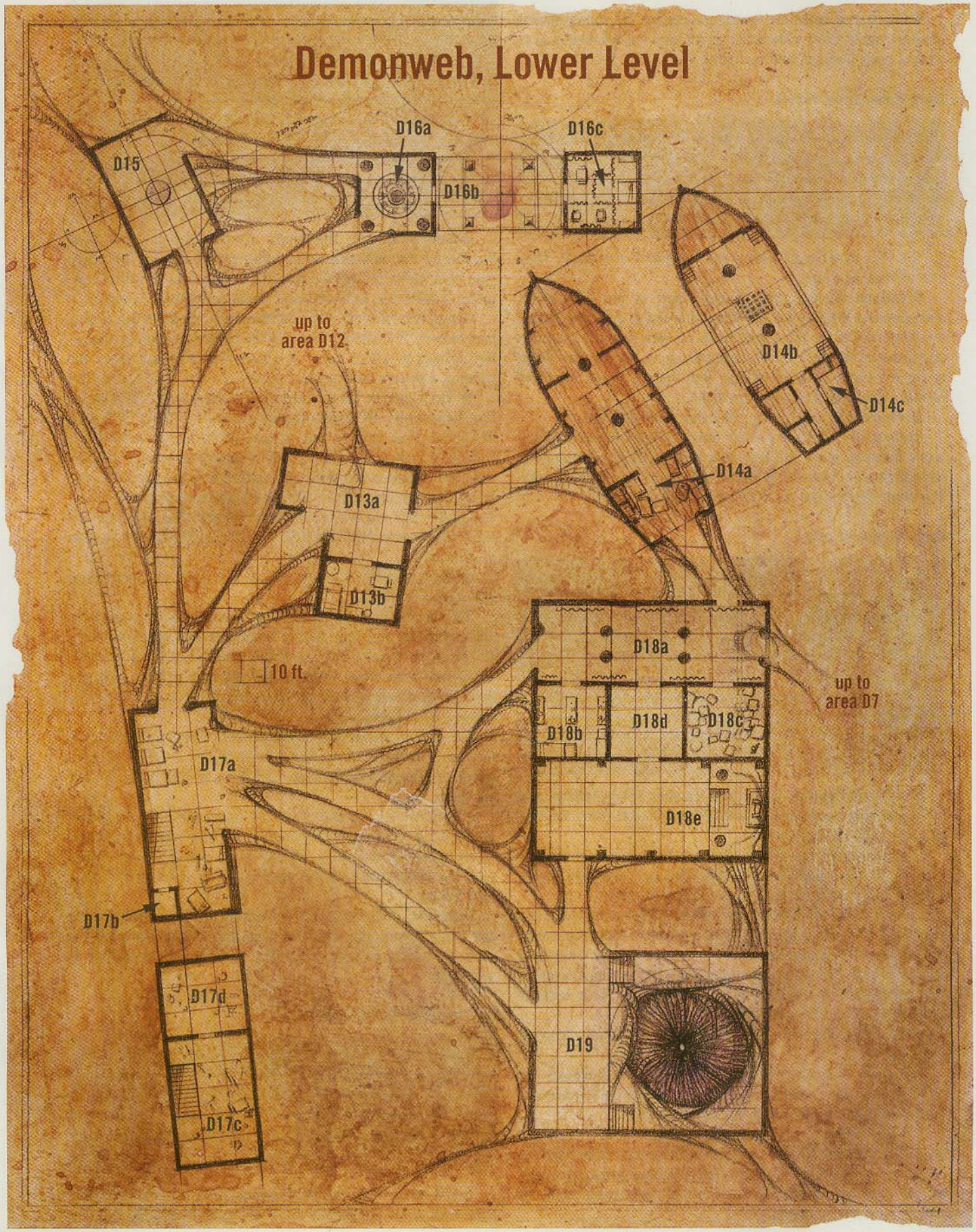
D13b. Helcav's Bedchamber. This room serves as Helcav's personal quarters, although he spends little time there. It has a bed, a wardrobe, two tables (one round, one rectangular), and a large round chest. The chest is locked, and Helcav has the key. A successful Open Lock skill check (DC 18) allows the chest to be opened, revealing the **Treasure** within.

Treasure: Inside the round chest, Helcav keeps a number of personal belongings, including a mummified drow hand (a *hand of the mage*) and ten ivory figurines worth 100 gp each.

D14. The Ship. This vessel was drawn into the Abyss through a magical gate many years ago and has became entangled in the Demonweb.

If the ship is viewed from afar (such as from area **D16b**), show players Illustration #10 and use the following text:

Trapped within the chaotic mesh of webs is a large ship. One hundred feet long and 30 to 40 feet wide, the vessel's hull seems intact except for one or two holes joined to tubular web passages. The tattered gray sails testify to the vessel's age, but there's nothing to suggest to how it arrived here.


Demonweb, Lower Level
D15
D16a
D16b
D16c
up to
area D12
D14b
D14c
D14a
D13a
D13b
10 ft.
D18a
D18b
D18d
D18c
D18e
up to
area D7
D17a
D17b
D17d
D17c
D19

Unnumbered areas are empty except for old rotting crates (empty), sacks filled with rotten grain, and miscellaneous gear (ropes, sails, buckets, and so forth).

D14a. Rummaging Fiends.

The wooden walls, floors, and ceiling of this hold are covered with cobwebs. Scattered about are wooden crates and burlap sacks. Some of the sacks have spilled open to reveal rotten grain. Rummaging through the crates and sacks are two large, froglike bipeds with warty skin and wicked claws.

The PCs might think that these creatures are slaadi. They are, in fact, hezrou.

Creatures (EL 16): These hezrou, new to the Demonweb, and scouring the ship for anything interesting or edible. When encountered by the PCs, they have no idea about the captain and crew on the deck above (areas **D14b-c**), nor do they know about the battle with the slaadi. They haven't even heard of Laveth. They attack the PCs on sight.

Hezrous (2): hp 74, 65; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Tactics: The hezrou prefer physical confrontation. They won't summon more of their kind except as a last resort to save their own lives. (They're more likely to use *teleport without error* or *gaseous form* in that situation.)

D14b. Doomed Crew.

The main deck of the old ship, slightly aslant, bears every indication that the craft was in the middle of a voyage when it somehow ended up here. Tattered sails flutter slightly amid the webs, and lines and rigging extend up the masts. A door leads into the aftcastle, and the main deck is strewn with the dusty, skeletal remains of an ancient crew.

The ropes and rigging around the ship begin to heave slightly. The wheel turns. The ship's long-lost crew slowly materializes on the deck. Their ghostly, shimmering forms poorly conceal the anger in their long-dead hearts.

The ship is hopelessly wrecked. Its sails are in tatters, and the whole ship is entwined in the webs. PCs can climb the rigging to reach the crow's nest.

The quarterdeck is the 30 foot by 40 foot area above the aftcastle. It is surrounded on three sides by a wooden railing, and the ship's wheel is located in the deck's center.

Creatures (EL 13): The sailors' spirits are forever tied to the ship's decks as chaos spectres. There are eight chaos spectres, and they attack immediately. Their bodies still lie scattered about the deck, little more than skeletons. If a skeleton is somehow removed from the deck of the ship, the spectre is sent off to its final rest automatically.

Chaos Spectres (8): hp 45 each; see area **D1** for complete statistics.

Treasure: One of the skeletons clutches a *+2 scimitar*. The weapon is hidden under some dust and bones and requires a successful Search skill check (DC 15) to find.

D14c. The Captain. Characters approaching this room begin to detect the faint stench of decay. The foul odor grows stronger as they near this cabin. The door to the cabin opens easily to reveal the horror beyond:

The stench of death and decay grows stronger beyond the door. In the center of the cabin, a creature that was once human stands, the flesh of his legs melded with the floor. His outstretched hands fuse with the left and right walls—despite the fact that the walls are 25 feet apart!

In the center of the creature's chest pulses a green, translucent object, visible through his translucent skin. Red eyes seem to lance forward as its head turns to face the door. Glowing green spittle, like liquid power, oozes forth from the creature's slack jaw, but it makes no sound.

Creature (EL 15): The ship's former captain has been twisted by the evil, chaotic energies of the Abyss. The green gem held within its chest is one of Laveth's four power receptacles. Laveth has entrusted the creature to keep it safe.

Characters looking at the captain must resist its death gaze (see below). The captain then uses its breath weapon and spell-like abilities to inflict harm. The fact that it cannot leave the room is a severe hindrance.

The Captain: CR 15; Large Aberration (6 ft. tall, with 12-foot-long arms); HD 10d8+50; hp 95; Init -3 (Dex); Spd 0 ft.; AC 26 (-1 Size, -3 Dex, +14 natural, +6 deflection); Atk none; Face 5 ft. × 25 ft.; Reach 0 ft.; SA death gaze, breath weapon, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 30/+3; poison and electricity immunity; cold, fire, and acid resistance 20; SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +10 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +0, Will +9 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 21, Dex 4, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +15, Listen +8, Spot +2. *Feats:* Iron Will, Great Fortitude.

SA—Death Gaze (Su): Any living creature meeting the captain's gaze for the first time is struck by the equivalent of a *finger of death* spell (DC 17). Those who fail the saving throw are struck dead; those who succeed still take 3d6+15 points of damage. A creature that survives the death gaze cannot be harmed by it again.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): Once every 1d4 rounds, the captain can breathe a 30-foot-long cone of force that deals 10d6 points of damage, half damage if a Reflex saving throw (DC 20) succeeds.

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): At will—*death knell, deeper darkness, detect magic, feeblemind, greater dispelling, magic circle against good, slow, unholy aura, unholy blight.* These spell-like abilities are as the spells cast by a Sor15 (DC 10 + spell level).

Treasure: The receptacle embedded in the captain's chest can be removed only after the **Creature** is slain. The receptacle is an oblong, faceted green gem with an apparent value of 5,000 gp.

D15. Material World Gate.

This large chamber is filthy, its stone walls braced with rusted iron. Streaks of rust run down from the iron onto the stone. The whole place smells of dust and grime. In the middle of the room is a 10-foot diameter platform covered in runes. Rising up from the platform is a stationary column of swirling violet mist, also 10 feet in diameter.

The swirling violet mist is a magical *gate*, beyond which lies a material world completely under the control of Lolth, but one

that Laveth wishes to someday conquer. The world was seized by Lolth's forces ages ago, and the *gate* is rarely used now.

The world is dark and cold, its sun shrunken and white. The landscape is littered with abandoned, ruined cities occupied by undead and horrible monsters. Only a few withered plants still grow on this dim world. The *gate*, which is a two-way portal, opens at the bottom of a crater one mile wide.

Should the PCs wish to explore this world, feel free to devise encounters based on the sorts of monsters found here: demons, monstrous spiders, and undead. The drow have mostly lost interest in the place, and Lolth has all but forgotten it. Only after 1d4 days of exploring will the PCs find any living people (humans and dwarves) hiding amid the ruined cities. These people can tell the tale of Lolth's invasion decades ago and the horrors that have occurred since, although few creatures seem to come through the *gate* anymore.

Creatures (EL 15): The crater is patrolled by two iron golems shaped like spiders. They attack any unfamiliar creatures near the *gate*, but not demons, drow, spiders, or driders. The iron spiders are faster and more agile than most iron golems.

Iron Spider Golems (2): CR 13; Large Construct (12 ft. long); HD 18d10; hp 99 each; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 31 (-1 size, +22 natural); Atk +23/+23 (2d10+11/2d10+11, slams); Reach 10 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ construct, magic immunity, damage reduction 50/+3, rust vulnerability; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 33, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1.

D16. Dimensional Interface. This series of rooms maintains the magical controls used for drawing things into the Demonweb from elsewhere in the multiverse.

D16a. Abyssal Clock. Show players Illustration #11.

A square room lies before you, the central portion consisting of a 5-foot-wide pit of unknown depth. The pit has a 1-foot-high lip around its circumference. Surrounding the pit are twelve large metal numerals bolted to the floor. A single, 3-foot-long, spearlike metal shaft juts out of the lip of the pit and points at the numeral "four."

This is a large clock powered by magic. The spearlike shaft moves slowly around the outside of the pit like the hour hand of a clock. It's intended as a reference for the magical device in area **D16b**. Damaging the hand (Hardness 15, 10 hp) stops the clock from functioning.

Thanks to a *permanent darkness* spell cast at 17th-level, the pit is impenetrably dark. A successful *dispel magic* or *daylight* spell removes the darkness, revealing a 30-foot-deep shaft filled with 10 feet of acid. Folded against the sides of the pit are three metallic tentacles (see **Trap** below).

Trap (EL 12): If the clock's face or hand is disturbed, three Large metallic tentacles issue forth from the pit. These tentacles each have a Strength of 20, a 20-foot reach, and a +10 melee attack bonus. They deal no damage but instead grapple victims. Grappled PCs are dragged down into the pit and dipped in the acid. Although the tentacles are immune, grappled PCs suffer 10d6 points of acid damage per round of immersion. Each tentacle has Hardness 10 and 60 hp.

Up to three Medium-sized or smaller creatures can be dipped in the acid at once. However, only one Large-sized creature can fit into the pit at a time.

30-foot-deep Acid Pit: CR 12; +10/+10/+10 melee (grapple, 3 tentacles), 10d6 points of acid damage per round (no save for grappled victims); Search (n/a); Disable Device (DC 30 per tentacle).

D16b. Open Area.

Four obsidian obelisks rise from the floor of this open platform. Each is enruned with strange designs and has a large round knob on one side. A large sliding iron lever, 2 feet long, juts up from the center of the floor between all four obelisks. Floating in the middle of the room, above the lever, is a hazy image of a vast desert of red sand. Within this scene, a city waits upon the horizon, and a hot yellow sun beats down upon the whole area. A small, black lizard scurries from one rock to another.

From this platform, you can see into the web: a complicated cacophony of strands and netlike walls of silk. About 20 feet away and 30 feet above the platform's edge, you see what looks like the prow of a wooden ship caught in the webs.

The obelisks generate the floating image, which is a scene from some random world in the multiverse. If the knobs on the obelisks are turned like dials, the image in the center of the room changes. These knobs manipulate a dimensional attunement device that can bring objects from the place shown in the image to the Demonweb (see below). Using this device, the Demonweb's inhabitants steal buildings, kidnap victims, spy on enemies, and so forth.

This device is so complex that anyone short of Lolth herself cannot fathom how to pinpoint anything precisely. Even Laveth couldn't use it to kidnap Alerian, for example, because it is too difficult to pinpoint a specific person or place. The residents here usually twirl the knobs until something interesting randomly appears.

If the PCs play with the knobs, they'll see many strange things (feel free to describe any strange scene in the multiverse that you care to), but almost certainly nothing familiar.

Close examination of the lever reveals that has 12 notches or settings, and that they're numbered. The lever is currently set at "6." These numbers correspond with the numbers on the clock face in area **D16a**. When the lever is placed at a given position at the clock reaches that hour, whatever is shown in the image generated by the obelisks is pulled into the Demonweb. (Currently, the device is unmonitored and pulling in nothing but red sand.) The energies involved are so chaotic that there's no control as to where the captured mass appears in the Demonweb.

Development: If she hears any noise atop this platform, the marilith from area **D16c** investigates.

D16c. Vil the Marilith.

This luxurious chamber is well appointed with dark, morose tapestries, a red velvet-covered bed, red velvet-covered chairs, and a lot of thick red and black draperies concealing the far corners and a few other areas of the room. Drawing back a curtain, a snake-bodied woman with six gracefully muscular arms slithers forward. She wields a weapon in each hand and bears a large, jeweled headband on her brow.

The drapes aren't meant to conceal anything in particular. The **Creature** that dwells here likes the idea that even in her one room, there are plenty of places to hide.

The full contents of the room include a large bed, six chairs, a couch, a table, a nightstand, and a chest. PCs who search the room find the **Treasure**.

Creature (EL 17): The creature is Vil, a marilith. She's long maintained this whole section and knows all about the dimensional device in area **D16b** (but can't use it with much precision). She attacks any intruders but won't fight to the death if she can help it. She tries to barter her treasure (particularly the cursed armor) if she can't just flee.

Vil wields the following weapons:

- Shivatri, a *+2 scimitar* (+15/+10 melee; 1d6+7/crit 18-20);
- Kalivos, a *+2 scimitar* (+15/+10 melee; 1d6+7/crit 18-20);
- Dedrafensor, a *+2 chaotic longsword* (+15/+10 melee; 1d8+7, +2d6 vs. lawful creatures/crit 19-20);
- Tyranny, a *+2 longsword of mighty cleaving* (+15/+10 melee; 1d8+7, grants 1 extra cleave attack per round/crit 19-20);
- Zhûl, a *+3 battleaxe* (+16/+11 melee; 1d8+8/crit ×3).

Vil, Marilith (1): hp 93; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Tactics: Vil attempts to summon more demons right away (50% chance of success), hoping to use 1d4 hezrou to hold off the PCs while she casts *unholy aura* on herself, creates a *magic circle against good*, and attacks with *unholy blight* and *greater dispelling*. She gladly fights with her arsenal of magic weapons, if need be.

Treasure: Vil wears three gold armbands (50 gp each) and a gem-studded gold tiara (250 gp). She keeps 12 gold bars (worth 300 gp each), a coffer containing 250 pp, and a suit of *full-plate of arrow attraction* in her quarters.

D17. Barracks. This stone building was a drow barracks, although most of the original inhabitants are dead.

D17a. Terrible Remains. This large chamber might have once been a barracks of some kind, but now the bunks have been tipped over and smashed, feathered mattresses spilling their contents amid the blood that soaks the floor. Corpses lie amid the wreckage, torn apart by terrible claws.

There are 23 dead drow fighters (of mixed genders) here and two slain succubi. They were killed by the slaad in area **D17d**.

Treasure: Amid the wreckage, PCs who make a successful Search skill check (DC 15) find 33 gp, 89 sp, a masterwork short sword, and a silver mirror worth 50 gp.

D17b. Large Closet. The door to this room is locked and made of sturdy wood (DC 23 to break down). Inside is a small armory with 10 short swords, 10 small shields, 10 hand crossbows, 200 crossbow bolts, nine suits of drow-sized

mithral chainmail, and one suit of *+2 mithral chainmail.* A small locked box holds 20 applications (doses) of the drow sleep poison (DC 15; initial sleep for 1 minute, secondary sleep for 3d6 minutes) and three doses of wyvern poison (DC 17; initial and secondary 2d6 temporary Constitution).

D17c. Slain Demon.

The destruction continues upstairs in a room that might have been a dining room or lounge. A large, vulturelike creature lies gutted and impaled upon some of the broken and splintered wooden furniture.

The dead creature is a vrock slain by the slaad in area **D17d.**

D17d. Death on Two Legs.

The furnishings in this room lie shattered and tossed about. Broken bits of wood, splintered and torn, ripped apart mattresses and twisted bits of metal suggest that this was once the sleeping quarters for a number of people.

Standing amid the destruction is a black-skinned humanoid with a muscular, sinewy body and a broad, flat head. Its wide mouth is filled with jagged, sharklike teeth, and its terrifying claws drip with blood.

Creature (EL 14): This death slaad, Gylgurdreg, knows that Laveth meant to betray it and its kind and slew all the drow and demons in areas **D17a** and **D17c.** The drow and demons in nearby areas (areas **D13, D18,** and **D19**) know that the death slaad is here, but they are too terrified to confront it.

At will, the death slaad can use a free action to transform its claws into brilliant energy. (It can change them back to normal with a free action as well.) As brilliant energy weapons, the claws ignore non-living matter including armor. The slaad can use its spell-like abilities regardless of the state of its claws.

Gylgurdreg, Death Slaad (1): hp 126; *Monster Manual* 166-168.

Tactics: The slaad lets loose with *finger of death* and *fireball* as soon as it can, followed by *implosion.* It is not afraid to use its brilliant energy claws and savage bite.

Treasure: A successful Search skill check (DC 15) uncovers 23 pp, 140 gp, and a jeweled comb (200 gp) amid the destroyed furnishings.

D18. Laveth's Palace. Laveth lives here, although she controls a much larger area. While her minions call this her palace, it's really just her suite. In any event, the structure itself is tall and gothic, torn from some gloomy city on another plane. The doors are made of iron-reinforced wood with built-in locks, but they are usually unlocked. The ceilings are 20 feet high.

Iron-Reinforced Wooden Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 19); Open Lock (DC 23).

D18a. Grand Hall.

Two iron chandeliers hang from the ceiling of this dark hall, but there are no candles in them. The walls are covered in long tapestries adorned with garish images. Suddenly and silently, an enormous spider covered in metal plates, spikes, and hooks looms out of the darkness.

Creature (EL 10): A Gargantuan Abyssal monstrous spider dwells here as Laveth's pet and guardian. It attacks anyone who enters other than Eaman and Laveth, unless commanded otherwise. Because of Eaman's tinkering, it receives a +8 bonus to AC and a +4 bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Gargantuan Abyssal Armored Monstrous Spider (1): CR 10; Gargantuan Vermin (32-ft. diameter); HD 24d8+24; hp 166; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 26 (-4 size, +3 Dex, +9 natural, +8 armor); Atk +24 melee (2d8+13 and poison, bite); Face 20 ft. × 20 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SA poison (DC 31; initial and secondary damage 2d6 Strength), web (Escape DC 30; Break DC 36; hp 16), *smite good* (1/day; +20 damage); SQ vermin; darkvision 60 ft.; damage reduction 10/+3; cold and fire resistance 20; SR 25; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 23, Dex 17, Con 12, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 2.

Skills: Climb +18, Hide -2, Jump +6, Spot +7.

Development: If Laveth (see area **D18d**) hears the sounds of battle, she comes to investigate. Eaman, however, remains in his room (area **D18c**) unless it sounds like Laveth needs him, in which case he comes to her aid.

D18b. Laveth's Right-Hand Man.

This large, opulent bedchamber displays a macabre taste in decor. The room has a bed, wardrobe, and chest in one corner, but most of the space is devoted to two long tables covered in alchemical equipment and what appear to be parts of spiders of various sizes.

The occupant of this room uses the equipment on the tables to experiment on dead spiders, with the hope of adding artificial parts to arachnids, such as hooks, spikes, armor, and so forth. The Gargantuan spider in area **D18a** displays many of the fruits of these experiments.

Creature (EL 15): Eaman is an arachnemancer and Laveth's most powerful servant. He keeps to himself and his work most of the time but is loyal to Laveth, convinced that serving her will lead to greater power for himself. Eaman has two Abyssal monstrous spider ghosts as companions, but they are usually found in area **D18e.**

Eaman, Male Drow Wiz3/Rgr2/Arachnemancer10: CR 15; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 3d4 (Wiz) plus 2d8 (Rgr) plus 10d6 (Arachnemancer); hp 44; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+7 *web armor,* +3 Dex); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d6+3/crit 19-20, *+2 short sword*), +11 melee (1d6+3/crit 19-20, *+2 short-sword*); or +9/+4 ranged (1d4/crit 19-20, hand crossbow); SA favored enemy—elves (+1), spells, spider blast, poison touch, spiderform (size Diminutive to Gargantuan), drow spell-like abilities, *displacement;* SR 26; AL CE; SV Fort +9, +19 vs. poison (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +13 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +9 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 12, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Climb +16, Concentration +13, Handle Monstrous Spider +15, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +6, Move Silently +16, Spellcraft +15. *Feats:* Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Track, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: web armor (see "New Magic Items" sidebar), major *cloak of displacement,* two *+2 short swords, headband of intellect,* scroll of *iron body,* hand crossbow, 10 bolts, pouch containing 35 pp.

Wizard Spells (4/3/2): 0—*daze, detect magic, mage hand, read magic;* 1st—*magic missile* (×2), *shield;* 2nd—*bull's strength, endurance.*

Arachnemancer Spells (4/4/4/3): 1st—*cause fear, spider climb, summon spider I* (×2); 2nd—*spiderskin, summon spider II, summon spider swarm, web;* 3rd—*poison* (×2), *summon monstrous spider III* (×2); 4th—*spider plague, summon monstrous spider IV, wall of webs.*

Tactics: In battle, Eaman summons spiders and casts *bull's strength* and *endurance.* He then casts *iron body* from a scroll so that he can confront foes physically, relying on his major *cloak of displacement* and *web armor* to confound enemies.

Treasure: A successful Search skill check (DC 18) reveals, amid the clutter on the tables, two tanglefoot bags, three thunderstones, two doses of Large monstrous spider venom (DC 16; initial and secondary 1d6 Strength), and a *potion of gaseous form.* The chest is locked, requiring a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 22) to open, but contains nothing but more alchemical equipment. The top shelf of the wardrobe, which is otherwise filled with clothes, holds an ornate silver box (worth 100 gp by itself) filled with 230 pp.

Development: If Eaman knows that Laveth is in danger, he comes to her aid. In Stage 3, he accompanies her to the Ritual Chamber (area P4).

D18c. Laveth's Chamber.

The floor of this room is plush, as though it were one huge burgundy pillow. A number of throw pillows are scattered about. The whole place looks quite comfortable and welcoming, except for the fact that a freshly dead elf hangs suspended from the ceiling by chains. The elf seems drained of blood, but there are no bloodstains on the floor or pillows.

The elf was tortured to death by Laveth. She later drank his blood in celebration.

Treasure: The far right-hand corner of the padded floor pulls up to reveal a hidden compartment. In this small depression is one of Laveth's receptacles. Finding the compartment requires a successful Search skill check (DC 15). The receptacle looks like an oblong, faceted green gem with an apparent value of 5,000 gp.

Stage 1

Laveth is here. If forewarned of danger, she has already cast *invisibility, endurance,* and *bull's strength* on herself. She also uses her *spider climb* spell to cling to the wall above the door.

Creature (EL 18): Laveth attacks intruders but does not fight to the death—at least, not here. If pressed, she *teleports* to area D18e or the Ritual Chamber (area P4).

Laveth, Female Half-Drow Sor7/Arachnemancer10: CR 18; Medium-Size Outsider (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 7d4+21 (Sor) plus 10d6+30 (Arachnemancer); hp 120; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 34 (+7 *web armor,* +4 *ring of protection,* +5 Dex, +8 natural); Atk +22/+22 melee (1d6+5 [×2], claws); or +25/+20/+15 melee (1d8+8/crit 19-20, +3 *demonsblood longsword*); SA spells, spider blast, poison touch, spider form, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 20/+2; poison and electricity immunity; cold, fire, and acid resistance 20; webwalking, evasion; SR 28; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +15, Will +14; Str 20, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +14, Climb +15, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +14, Handle Monstrous Spider +24, Hide +15, Jump +15, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (nature) +14, Listen +14, Move Silently +15, Sense Motive +14, Search +15, Spellcraft +14, Spot +15. *Feats:* Cleave, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack.

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): At will—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire, fear, teleport without error, unhallow, chaos hammer* (1/day), *unholy blight* (1/day). These spell-like abilities are as the spells cast by a Sor17.

Sorcerer Spells (6/7/7/5), chosen from the following: 0—*daze, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic;* 1st—*charm person, magic missile, shield, shocking grasp, true strike;* 2nd—*bull's strength, endurance, invisibility;* 3rd—*fireball, fly.*

Arachnemancer Spells (5/4/3/3): 1st—*cause fear* (×2), *spider climb, summon spider I* (×2); 2nd—*summon spider II, summon spider swarm, web* (×2); 3rd—*poison, summon monstrous spider III* (×2); 4th—*spider plague, summon monstrous spider IV, wall of webs.*

Possessions: web armor (see "New Magic Items" sidebar), *+4 ring of protection, ring of evasion, +3 demonsblood longsword* (see "New Magic Items" sidebar), *spider brooch of shielding* (absorbs 101 hit points of *magic missile* damage), gem-inlaid platinum necklace (worth 5,000 gp).

Stages 2 and 3

During Stage 2, Laveth is in her throne room (area D18e). During Stage 3, she is overseeing the Harrowing Ritual in area P4.

D18d. Gas Trap.

The walls of this 30-foot-square room are carved with faces captured in torment. Hanging from the ceiling by silk webs are four golden censers shaped like spiders. They dangle 10 feet from the ceiling and 20 feet above the floor.

This room appears normal, but anyone who crosses the room without bearing the symbol of Laveth activates the **Trap.** The gold censers, which are part of the trap, are also the **Treasure.**

Trap (EL 8): Triggering the trap causes both doors to seal with *arcane locks* (cast at 7th level). Immediately afterward, poison gas begins to billow from holes in the spider censers. All living creatures within the room must make a successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 26) each round or take 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage. The gas continues to issue forth until 10 rounds have elapsed, the doors are opened, or the censers are all destroyed.

Cutting the webs that support the censers causes them to fall 20 feet, taking 2d6 points of damage. Each censer has Hardness 5, AC 15, and 8 hp. The web strands are surprisingly resilient (Break DC 36; AC 20; hp 16 each).

The censers can be disabled one at a time by a clever PC who takes a full-round action to plug the holes, which requires a successful Disable Device skill check (DC 25). The gas is not magical and cannot be *dispelled.*

Gas Trap: CR 8; 1d6 temporary Constitution each round, Fortitude saving throw (DC 26) negates; Search (n/a); Disable Device (DC 25).

Treasure: Intact, the gold censers are worth 500 gp each. They are ornate but nonmagical.

D18e. The Spider Throne.

The polished obsidian walls and floor of this grand hall seem to devour light. At the far end of the hall stands an ebony throne carved with intricate gold filigree and set with two massive red rubies. Sprouting from the back of the throne are eight massive spider legs that twitch in the gloom.

Anyone other than Laveth who sits on the throne or tries to remove the rubies activates the **Trap**. The rubies are the chamber's only portable **Treasure**.

Trap (EL 14): Sitting on Laveth's throne or prying loose the rubies causes the throne's eight spidery arms to lash forth, each striking with a +16 melee touch attack modifier and delivering a *finger of death* spell (cast at 14th level). All eight legs have a 20-foot reach and can strike a single target. The legs each have AC 15 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +4 natural), damage reduction 5/+1, and 40 hp. Each leg can deliver only one *finger of death* spell, which is expended whether or not the attack actually hits its target.

Eight-Legged Spider Throne: CR 8 per leg; 20-ft. reach; +16 melee touch (*finger of death* spell, 8 legs); death, Fortitude save (DC 21) to reduce damage to 3d6+14 points; Search (n/a); Disable Device (n/a).

Treasure: The two rubies are worth 1,000 gp each. Removing them requires a successful Strength check (DC 20).

Stages 1 and 3

Creatures (EL 10): The room is guarded by Eaman's pets: two Huge Abyssal monstrous spider ghosts. Normally, creatures classified as "vermin" cannot become ghosts, but thanks to the Abyssal spiders' malign intelligence and Eaman's experimentation, they exist as undead. Although undead, they do anything Eaman says and come if he calls.

Huge Abyssal Monstrous Spider Ghosts (2): CR 8; Huge Undead (15-foot diameter); HD 10d12; hp 66 each; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect), climb 20 ft.; AC ethereal 16 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural), nonethereal 12 (-2 size, +3 Dex, +1 deflection); Atk +9 melee touch (2d6+6, bite); Face 15 ft. × 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SA manifestation, corrupting gaze, smite good (1/day; +10 damage bonus); SQ undead (incorporeal); rejuvenation; +4 turn resistance; cold and fire resistance 15; damage reduction 5/+2; darkvision 60 ft.; SR 20; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 19, Dex 17, Con —, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 6. See *MM* 212 for more information on the "ghost" template.

Skills: Climb +16, Hide +10, Jump +4, Listen +8, Search +8, Spot +15.

SA—Manifestation (Su): When they manifest, the spiders become visible but remain incorporeal (as described in the *Monster Manual*, page 6). Their bite is treated as a melee touch attack and ignores armor.

SA—Corrupting Gaze (Su): Living creatures that meet a spider ghost's gaze must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 13) or suffer 2d10 points of damage and 1d4 points of permanent Charisma drain.

Stage 2

Laveth is sitting on the throne. While seated, she can silently command the spider legs to attack (see **Trap** above) while she casts spells. Eaman's two Huge Abyssal monstrous spider ghosts lurk here as well, manifesting when commanded.

Creatures (EL 10, 23 if Laveth is present): Laveth is happy engage intruders in battle. If seriously threatened, she *teleports* to area P4. Eaman's two Huge Abyssal monstrous spider ghosts manifest when commanded to attack.

D19. Orifice.

An eerie, purple light illuminates a large chamber with a vaulted ceiling 25 feet above. The stone floor falls away, revealing a sunken section composed of thick, hard webs. Black smoke issues from a gaping, 30-foot-diameter hole in the lower portion of the chamber. This black maw is ringed with old bones, broken weapons and equipment, scraps of clothing, and other refuse. A single, 1-foot thick web strand extends down from the ceiling into the middle of this pit.

Although resembling a horrible trash pit, the orifice actually grants access to Laveth's well-hidden secrets. The pit leads down into the Demonweb Pits. From this pit, looking down, a character can see a dark area below the web floor, seemingly spun from gray darkness but punctuated with frequent pits darker than the blackest night. The web strand plummets down into one of those pits.

The web strand is slightly adhesive and easy to climb (DC 0). It takes at least 15 minutes to climb down to Laveth's Secret Garden (area P1). PCs can also fly down with ease. The drop is approximately 1,000 feet.

Stages 1 and 2

This room is unoccupied.

Stage 3

If many of the NPCs who serve Laveth are still alive (see area P4, below), some or all of them can be encountered here if you think that including them in the final encounter makes the final encounter far too difficult. Any drow encountered here are on their way to the Ritual Chamber. They work fairly well together and attempt to flee down the strand or out the passages if one of them is taken down by the PCs.

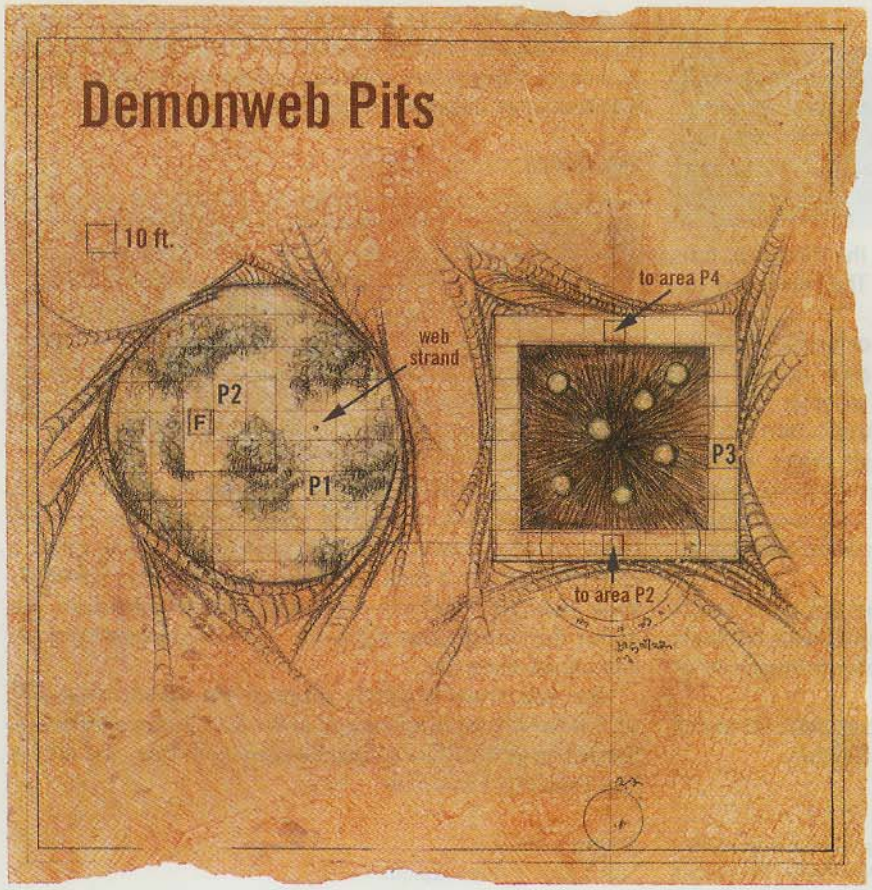
Demonweb Pits (Areas P1-P4)

The Demonweb Pits lie below the Demonweb, collecting anything that falls from it. The sides of the pits are made of nothing but impenetrable (and, in theory, semi-solid) darkness, and the pits plunge down into unknown dark depths.

The pits are very dark. All light sources, even magical ones, have the range of their illumination reduced by half.

Characters who can fly can theoretically explore other pits. If this happens, you might need to create additional encounters. These encounters should be particularly nasty to discourage random exploration of this place (normally thought to be the darkest, most terrifying portion of an already horrible place). Encounters might include:

- 2d4 bebiliths waiting for demons to fall from the web into their clutches;
- a half-fiend black wyrm dragon in its dark lair;
- a coven of 2d6 succubus vampires;
- 1d4+1 hezrou "swimming" in the darkness;
- a gigantic, 50-foot-diameter *sphere of annihilation* used by the fiends to dispose of particularly troublesome foes, guarded by 2d4 Colossal Abyssal monstrous spiders.



P1. Laveth's Secret Garden.

The long web strand finally ends deep within one of the pits. Suspended in the webs, amid what must be millions of pitted bones, dried fleshy husks, and other refuse from the Demonweb, a round platform hangs covered in plants and growth. Most of the plants appear to be either green vines or yellow, bell-flowered plants. The platform is covered in moist soil to support the garden.

The 3-foot-thick stone platform is covered by 3 feet of dark soil. PCs who make a successful Search skill check (DC 15) can find a locked metal hatch. Once open, the PCs can climb an iron ladder down to lower chamber (area P2).

Locked Metal Hatch: 1 in. thick; Hardness 15; hp 50; Break (DC 30); Open Lock (DC 25).

Trap (EL 11): Anyone other than Laveth or someone bearing the symbol of Laveth is attacked by 1d4 of the bell-flowered plants each round. Each plant sprays a stream of acid from its bloom identical to a *Melf's acid arrow* spell cast by a 10th-level sorcerer. The acid is magical and therefore subject to spell resistance rolls. Any creature caught flat-footed by the acid sprays loses its Dexterity bonus to AC. The acid sprays can reach anywhere on the platform.

There are 24 bell-flower plants growing atop the platform. Each plant has 10 hp and acid immunity and takes double damage from fire and cold.

Bell-Flower Blooms (24): CR 2 per plant; +5 melee touch (2d4 points of acid damage per round for 4 rounds).

Creatures (EL +4, see below): One mound of vegetation near the metal hatch is actually a pair of tendriculi. They are immune to acid and attack if the bell-flowers are activated. The two tendriculi combined with the **Trap** constitute an EL 15 encounter.

Tendriculi (2): hp 94 each; *Monster Manual* 175 (tendriculos).

P2. Norded's Head. This chamber is located underneath area P1. The metal hatch leading to the room is detailed above. Read or paraphrase the text below when the PCs enter:

The iron ladder connects to the floor of a 30-foot-square room 20 feet below the level of the garden.

Two wooden barrels stand next to the left-hand wall. A dwarf's disembodied head floats near the far wall, connected to a strange, gear-driven contraption by a cluster of wrapped, flexible tubes. The head's eyes flutter open, and it speaks. "Tread no farther. Only the blessed of Laveth can proceed."

The walls, floor, and ceiling are made of stone. Directly behind the floating head and the machine is a flat iron panel bolted to the stone wall. The metal plate bears the symbol of Laveth (the outline of a woman with extra spider arms). Any PC who touches it is *teleported* to area P3 in a bright flash of light.

Creature (EL 10): The head belonged to a dwarf fighter named Norded who crossed Laveth long ago. Now, as punishment, he is forced to guard this area as a strange abomination of magic and machine. The head and machine are surrounded by a special *wall of force* that is permeable to sonic attacks. Using his sonic attacks, Norded can attack through the wall. If the *wall of force* is somehow destroyed (by a *disintegrate* spell, for example), it restores itself in 1d4 rounds.

Norded is churlish and surly in his current situation. Characters without a symbol of Laveth will not be allowed to pass. A successful Diplomacy skill check (DC 20) gets Norded to answer basic questions ("What happens if I touch the plate?" or "How did you get here?"), while a higher Diplomacy skill check or Bluff skill check (DC 30) might convince him to let an unauthorized person touch the plate.

Nothing short of a *wish* can restore Norded. Any offers to help restore him make him more churlish, since he knows it's practically impossible. Any disrespect or threatening move by someone not bearing the proper symbol prompts him to attack.

Norded, Dwarf Head and Contraption (1): CR 10; Large Semi-Intelligent Construct (10 ft. tall); HD 8d8; hp 50; Init -4 (Dex); Spd 0 ft.; AC 5 (-1 size, -4 Dex); Atk none; Reach 0 ft.; SA sonic blast, sonic shatter; SQ *wall of force* (renews itself within 1d4 rounds if brought down); poison and acid immunity; cold, fire, and electricity resistance 30; SR 20; AL CE; SV Fort

+5, Ref -2, Will +7; Str 0, Dex 1, Con —, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills: Concentration +5, Listen +4, Sense Motive +10, Spot +4.

SA—Sonic Blast (Su): Once per round as a standard action, Norded can unleash a sonic blast that deals 8d6 points of damage to all living creatures within 30 feet.

SA—Sonic Shatter (Su): Once per round as a standard action, Norded can direct a sonic attack to shatter objects (as the *shatter* spell).

P3. The Prison. PCs who touch the magical plate in area P2 are teleported to this area.

> The flash of light brings you to another platform suspended in a deep pit by webs. This platform is square with the center cut out so that it simply forms a 10-foot walkway that traces around the perimeter of a 60-foot-wide area.
>
> Seven transparent globes, each holding some sort of creature, float in the middle of the open area. An iron plate engraved with the image of a woman with spidery arms is secured to the platform at your feet.

This platform, like area P1, is suspended by webs within one of the Demonweb Pits. The plate, if touched, returns a character to area P2. An identical plate is bolted to the floor on the other side of the square platform, across the open area. It sends all who touch it to area P4.

Each of the globes is an *Otto's telekinetic sphere*, ranging from 5 to 10 feet in diameter. Laveth can mentally control the spheres, bringing them closer to the edge of the platform. The globes are permanent until *dispelled, disintegrated,* or otherwise destroyed. Any creature released from its prison above the open area falls into the Demonweb Pit below. The pit is 1,000 feet deep, enclosed by hard webbing, inhabited (see **Creatures** below), and littered with precious items (see **Treasure** below).

Creatures (EL varies): At the bottom of the pit lurks a hungry retriever (EL 10), which devours anything that falls into its grasp. Trapped within each *telekinetic sphere* is a prisoner:

Globe #1 (EL 13): Tzarrc, a vrock that angered Laveth. It has *dimensional shackles* fitted around its legs.

Globe #2 (EL 7): Ghuandan, a drider that betrayed Laveth.

Globe #3 (EL 6): Maldorl, a 6th-level male drow fighter who was caught trying to relay information about Laveth's plans to his dark mistress, Lolth.

Globe #4 (EL —): Esad, a 1st-level male elf commoner whom Laveth plans to sacrifice.

Globe #5 (EL —): Nariel, a 1st-level female elf commoner whom Laveth plans to sacrifice.

Globe #6 (EL —): Alerian, the captured elf cleric (in Stages 1 and 2) whom Laveth plans to sacrifice, or Lervalas, a 1st-level male elf commoner (in Stage 3). Alerian is held immobile by *iron bands of Bilarro* (command word "sornorvir").

Globe #7 (EL —): Brudis Charif, a 9th-level half-elf fighter captured with Alerian.

Retriever (1): hp 78; *Monster Manual* 41-46 (demon).

Tzarrc, Vrock (1): hp 60; *Monster Manual* 41-46.

Ghuandan, Drider (1): hp 45; *Monster Manual* 78.

Maldorl, Male Drow Ftr6: AC 12 (+2 Dex); hp 38; see "A Walk in the Woods" for other statistics. Maldorl has no armor or equipment.

Alerian, Male Elf Clr13 (Corellon Larethian): CR 13; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 5 in.); HD 13d8-13; hp 43; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +10/+5 melee (1d3+1 subdual, unarmed strike); or +11/+6 ranged (unarmed); SQ low-light vision, immune to *sleep*, +2 racial bonus to saves vs. enchantment; AL CG; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 12, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +9, Diplomacy +13, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +14, Listen +6, Search +4, Spellcraft +10, Spot +6. *Feats:* Alertness, Brew Potion, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Spells (6/6+1/6+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/2+1/1+1): 0—*detect magic, detect poison, guidance, light, resistance, virtue;* 1st—*bless, command, divine favor, endure elements, protection from evil, sanctuary*, shield of faith;* 2nd—*aid, bull's strength, endurance, lesser restoration, resist elements, shield other*, silence;* 3rd—*daylight, dispel magic, magic circle against evil, protection from elements*, remove curse, searing light;* 4th—*divine power, freedom of movement, holy smite*, neutralize poison* (×2); 5th—*dispel evil*, flame strike, healing circle, plane shift;* 6th—*find the path, greater dispelling, heal*;* 7th—*holy word*, resurrection.*

* Indicates domain spells. *Domains:* Good (cast good spells as Clr14), Protection (*protective ward* 1/day; grants +13 resistance bonus to next saving throw; duration 1 hour).

Brudis Charif, Male Elf Ftrg: CR 9; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 7 in. tall); HD 9d10; hp 55; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +12/+7 melee (1d3+3 subdual, unarmed strike); or +11/+6 ranged (unarmed); SQ low-light vision, immune to *sleep*, +2 racial bonus to saves vs. enchantment; AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +12, Jump +12, Listen +4, Search +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword, longbow), Weapon Specialization (longsword, longbow).

Tactics: Maldorl the drow helps the PCs for as long as it serves Lolth to do so, betraying them to his mistress at the first opportunity. However, if Brudis or Alerian are present, they refuse to ally themselves with the drow. Tzarrc and Ghuandan attack the PCs if released, hoping to win favor with Laveth.

If Alerian is released from the globe and the *iron bands of Bilarro*, he uses his spells to help Brudis and the PCs defeat Laveth. He can also use his *resurrection* spell to restore a slain character to life or his *plane shift* spell to allow passage back to the Prime Material plane. He casts his *heal* spell on any PC who appears grievously injured.

Treasure: Characters who slay the retriever at the bottom of the pit can find the following treasures scattered amid the few remaining bones of slain victims: 230 sp, 60 gp, a *golembane scarab* (iron), and a *wand of silence* (15 charges).

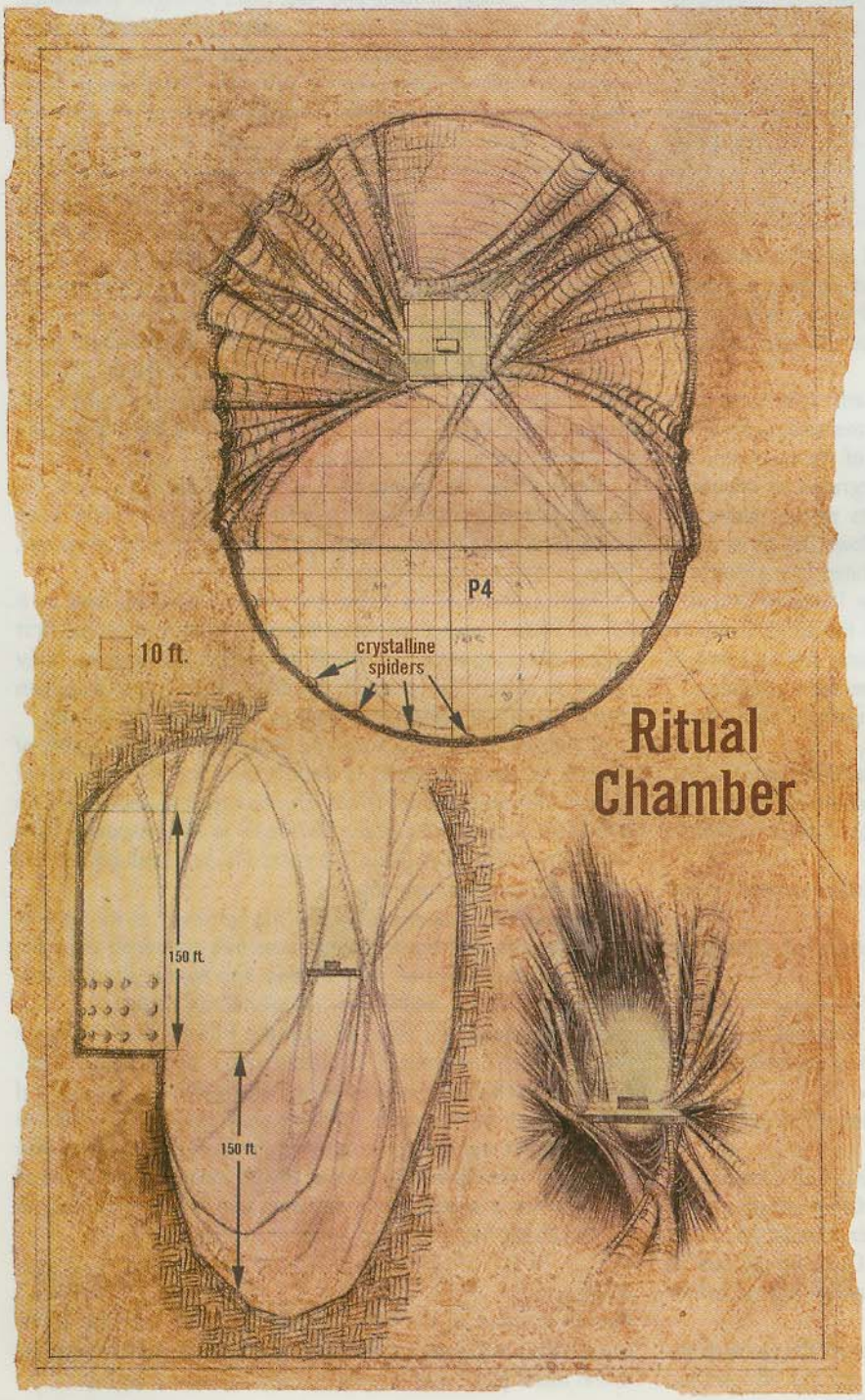
Development: The elves all help the PCs if freed, although the 1st-level commoners probably can't accomplish much. Brudis is particularly interested in helping Alerian. Brudis and Alerian know the details of Laveth's plans and her intention to challenge her mother for control of the Demonweb. They also know that the Harrowing Ritual will increase Laveth's power but requires a special blood sacrifice and four receptacles, in which Laveth has contained some of her divine power.

Stage 3

Alerian is taken to the Ritual Chamber. Brudis and the other elves watch as Laveth releases Alerian from his globe, drags him to the metal plate, and disappears with him (to area P4).

P4. The Ritual Chamber. PCs *teleported* by the plate in area P3 appear in the middle of the ledge overlooking this chamber.

You are standing on a semicircular, stone ledge, its walls adorned with rows of crystalline arachnids. The ledge overlooks a much large chamber filled with huge webs. The room is lit by a cloying scarlet mist that rises from below. The great mass of webs suspends a 30-foot-square, rusted iron platform. The platform hangs 60 feet from the ledge and 20 feet above you. An altar dominates the platform, and atop the altar a large green gem pulses with wicked power.



Show players Illustration #12 at this time.

The webs that support the altar platform are as strong as the webs that make up the Demonweb itself. Creatures able to walk on webs can reach the altar by moving to the far corners of the ledge and climbing one of the web strands. Otherwise, flying and teleporting (or similar magic) are the only means to reach the platform safely.

The scarlet mist bathes the entire Ritual Chamber in a vile light and is fully detailed under **Trap #1** below. The crystalline spiders are described under **Trap #2**.

Trap #1 (EL 7): The scarlet mist that fills the web-filled portion of the chamber is actually a concentrated form of insanity mist to which drow are immune (DC 15; initial 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage, secondary 2d6 points of temporary Wisdom damage). Each round of exposure requires a new save, and the effects are cumulative.

Anyone whose Wisdom is reduced to 0 by the poisonous mist withdraws into a deep sleep filled with horrible nightmares and is helpless.

PCs who hold their breath get a +4 bonus to the saving throw. Creatures that remain atop the ledge are not affected.

Stages 1 and 2

The room is empty, as Laveth is not yet ready to complete the Harrowing Ritual. The gem floating above the altar is one of Laveth's power receptacles.

Trap #2 (EL 10): The ledge is lined with four rows of thirteen crystalline spiders (52 total), each one firmly embedded in the semicircular stone wall. The first row is flush with the floor; the second row is 10 feet above the floor, the third row is 30 feet above the floor, and the fourth row is 50 feet above the floor.

Each crystalline spider is connected to the others by invisible rays, forming a web that spans the entire ledge to a height of 50 feet. A *see invisibility* or similar spell shows the rays as bright green ribbons of energy. Any PC who attempts to move through the "webbed" area must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC 26) or be struck by a ray, taking 5d6 points of force damage. The PC must also succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or take 1d3 points of temporary Dexterity damage.

A creature must make a new Reflex saving throw (DC 27) for every 5 feet traveled. Small creatures get a +2 size bonus to the saving throw, Tiny creatures get a +4 size bonus, Diminutive creatures gain a +8 size bonus, and Fine creatures save automatically.

Each crystalline spider has Hardness 10 and 5 hp. All must be destroyed to

completely deactivate the trap, but the more spiders that are destroyed, the easier it becomes to navigate through the energy web. For every two spiders destroyed, reduce the DC of the Reflex save by 1.

Anyone holding one of Laveth's power receptacles is immune to the effects of this trap. The trap can be deactivated magically by proclaiming "All hail Laveth!" in the Drow tongue.

Treasure: Floating above the altar by means of a *permanent levitate* spell is one of Laveth's power receptacles: an oblong, fist-sized green gem with an apparent value of 5,000 gp. Removing the gem from its place over the altar dispels the *levitate* effect.

Stage 3

Laveth stands atop the altar platform, her *demonsblood sword* drawn. Alerian lies splayed atop the altar. Laveth has removed the *iron bands of Bilarro* and allowed the chamber's insanity mist (see **Trap** #1 above) to overcome him. Laveth uses Alerian's helpless condition to perform a coup de grace (as described in the *Player's Handbook*, page 133).

To complete the Harrowing, Laveth must slay Alerian (or some other high-level cleric of an elven god) and allow his blood to spill on the altar. She must then touch each of her four power receptacles to the bloodied altar. (This requires a standard action.) Any power receptacles (see areas **D9e**, **D14c**, and **D18c**) not yet claimed by the PCs are here now and rest next to the altar.

When Laveth touches a power receptacle to the bloodied altar, the receptacle turns to powder and Laveth momentarily becomes infused with green energy. For each receptacle that is "fed" to the altar during the ritual, Laveth gains two levels as a sorcerer. Thus, if all four receptacles are consumed, Laveth becomes a 15th-level sorcerer with all the spells and skills to match.

Note that the crystalline spider trap (see **Stages 1 and 2** above) is deactivated for the duration of the ritual.

Creatures (EL 18+ for Laveth, higher if others are present): If Ilvadidra, Realthican, Tudrii, Helcav, and Eaman are alive, they are standing on the ledge, waiting for Laveth to slay Alerian and complete the Harrowing. If two or more of these NPCs are present with Laveth, the encounter might be too difficult for the PCs to overcome.

Tactics: Laveth will already have *fly, spider climb, bull's strength,* and *endurance* cast upon her at this point. While at a range, she summons spiders or uses *chaos hammer, unholy blight,* or *fireball.* In melee she uses her *demonsblood sword* or claws (accompanied perhaps by a *true strike, shocking grasp,* or *poison* spell).

Concluding the Adventure

If prevented from completing the Harrowing, Laveth is powerless to stop her mother and her mother's forces from retaking this portion of the Demonweb, killing all the traitorous drow and demons and imprisoning Laveth in Lolth's palace at the center of the Demonweb. If Laveth is killed, any of her remaining living servants flee to other portions of the Abyss immediately to hide from Lolth's wrath. Even though Laveth posed a threat to her dominion, Lolth does not react well to her daughter's death and might send a squad of Abyssal assassins to annihilate the PCs. (Such a squad appears in "Revenge of the Spider Queen" in *Dragon Magazine* #279.)

New Magic Items

Demonsblood Sword: This *+3 longsword* is made of hardened demon's blood. Any creature struck by the blade must make a successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 18) or contract demon fever (see *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 74), as small portions of the sword are left behind in the wound. A non-demon wielder must make the same Fortitude saving throw every 10 rounds she handles it.

Caster Level: 8th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a demon or half-demon; *Market Price:* 32,315 gp; *Cost To Create:* 16,315 gp + 1,293 XP.

Laveth's Power Receptacles: Laveth created these four large green gemstones to house portions of her semi-divine power until such time as she needed that power to challenge her mother's hold over the Demonweb. Each of these minor artifacts seethes with power and radiates a strong aura of evil.

The receptacles have a singular use: When used during a sacrificial ritual called the Harrowing, they imbue Laveth with new sorcerous power. For each receptacle that is consumed during the Harrowing, Laveth gains two levels as a sorcerer.

The receptacles are attuned to Laveth and cannot be used by anyone other than her. (This is just as well, since no one but a semi-divine being could survive the sudden infusion of so much magical energy.)

Each receptacle has Hardness 10 and 5 hp and is immune to fire, cold, electricity, and acid.

Market Price: 5,000 gp per gem

Rod of Viscid Globs: This thin rod can, upon issuance of the proper command word, launch small masses of a particularly sticky substance. A ranged touch attack roll is needed to strike a target. Any creature of Large size or smaller struck by the glob is treated as if *entangled.* Creatures of Huge size or larger are not appreciably affected. An *entangled* creature suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity. It can move at half speed but can't run or charge. An *entangled* creature that attempts to cast a spell must make a Concentration check (DC is usually 15) or lose the spell. Further, there is a 50% chance that the glob will attach the creature to any surface it is currently touching, rooting it to that spot.

A pint or more of alcohol will dissolve the glob. Otherwise, only time can help an *entangled* creature—after 2d6 minutes, the glob hardens, becomes brittle, and is easily broken and brushed away. The rod can be used five times per day.

Caster Level: 3rd; *Prerequisites:* Craft Rod, *entangle, grease; Market Price:* 6,000 gp.

Web Armor: This armor actually comes in a large flask. With a full-round action, a character can apply the substance in the flask to his body, coating him with a weblike suit of armor. The armor confers a +7 armor bonus but imposes no armor penalty, spell failure, or Maximum Dexterity Bonus, as it is entirely flexible and non-restrictive. It lasts for 24 hours.

Caster Level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *web,* creator must be an arachnemancer; *Market Price:* 5,000 gp; *Weight:* 5 lbs.

Arachnemancer (Prestige Class)

Among certain deviant cultures, the veneration of the spider is important in religious and arcane ways. Particularly loathsome individuals embrace this concept and adopt the spider as their totem, symbol, and very way of life. Among no race is this more common than the drow.

Arachnemancers are spellcasters who interact with spiders and whose magical abilities mimic the abilities of spiders. While all arachnemancers are arcanists to some degree, multiclass arachnemancers will find that the subtlety of a rogue or the combat prowess of a fighter complements the class nicely. Arachnemancers are usually loners, although they almost always have some sort of spider companion.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become an arachnemancer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Evil.

Knowledge (nature): 4 ranks.

Climb: 3 ranks.

Spellcasting: Able to cast *spider climb, web,* and *summon monster III.*

Special: Must undergo a scarification ritual.

Class Skills

The arachnemancer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft [any] (Int), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are features of the arachnemancer prestige class:

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The arachnemancer is proficient with all simple weapons, but no type of armor or shield.

Speak with Spiders (Su): The arachnemancer can freely communicate with spiders, monstrous spiders, aranea, driders, retrievers, bebiliths, and phase spiders.

Spider Magic (Su): An arachnemancer uses his total character level when determining level-based factors (range, duration, and so forth) of his arachnemancer spells.

Spiderform (Su): At 2nd level, the arachnemancer can change her form to that of a Small, Medium-size, or Large monstrous spider. This supernatural ability works like the spell, *polymorph self.* At 5th level the arachnemancer can also take the form of a Tiny or Huge monstrous spider. At 8th level, the arachnemancer can also become a Diminutive or Gargantuan monstrous spider. The change can last no more than 10 minutes per class level, but during that time, the arachnemancer can shift back and forth from the spider form and his real form as desired (the shift counting as a standard action).

Poison Touch (Ex): At 3rd level, the arachnemancer can secrete poison. At 3rd level, the arachnemancer's touch deals 1 point of temporary Strength damage. At 6th level the damage increases to 1d3 points; at 9th level it increases to 1d6 points. The arachnemancer can elect not to secrete poison. Secreted poison cannot be harvested or saved for any purpose.

Command Spiders (Ex): At 4th level, the arachnemancer can compel any spiderlike creature (including spiders, monstrous spiders, driders, retrievers, bebiliths, aranea, or phase spiders) to obey her verbal commands. An unwilling, intelligent

Table 1: The Arachnemancer

Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Poison Save Bonus	Spells per Day 1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Speak with spiders, spider magic	+1	2	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Spiderform	+2	2	1	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Poison touch (1 Str)	+3	2	2	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Command spiders	+4	2	2	1	—
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Webwalking, spiderform	+5	2	2	2	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Poison touch (1d3 Str)	+6	2	2	2	1
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	—	+7	2	2	2	2
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	Spiderform	+8	3	3	2	2
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	Poison touch (1d6 Str)	+9	3	3	3	2
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Spider blast	+10	3	3	3	3

Class Level: The level of the arachnemancer.

Attack Bonus: The arachnemancer's attack bonus, added to the character's normal attack bonus.

Fort Save: The save bonus on Fortitude saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Ref Save: The save bonus on Reflex saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Will Save: The save bonus on Will saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Special: Level-dependent class features.

Poison Save Bonus: The arachnemancer adds to bonus to all saving throws versus poisons.

Spells per Day: These are arcane spells (see *Player's Handbook,* Chapter 12) that are prepared and cast just as a wizard prepares and casts spells. Spell failure for wearing armor applies. If the entry is "—" for a given level of spells, the character cannot cast any spells of that level regardless of bonus spells. If the entry is a number, the character can cast that many spells plus any bonus spells. Bonus spells for arachnemancers are based on Intelligence, and an arachnemancer must have an Intelligence of at least 10 + a spell's level to cast that spell.

target is entitled to a Will saving throw (DC 10 + the class level of the arachnemancer + the arachnemancer's Charisma bonus). A failed saving throw indicates that the target obeys one command, as per a *suggestion* spell. A successful saving throw allows the creature to resist the command, but the arachnemancer can attempt to command it again next round. The act of commanding an unwilling target is a standard action. Otherwise, issuing commands is a free action.

Webwalking (Su): At 5th level, the arachnemancer can ignore *web* spells and spider webbing as if affected by a *freedom of movement* spell. She can walk along webs as if on solid ground (no Balance skill check required).

Spider Blast (Sp): A 10th-level arachnemancer can, once per day, conjure forth a 50-foot-long, cone-shaped blast of extremely poisonous normal-sized spiders. Anyone within the blast takes 5d4 points of damage and must succeed at 1d4 Fortitude saving throws against poison (DC 10 + the arachemancer's class level + Constitution bonus; initial and secondary damage 1d6 points of temporary Strength). Victims within the spider blast are allowed an initial Reflex saving throw (DC 10 + the arachnemancer's class level, or DC 20). If the Reflex saving throw is successful, the victim takes half damage and need only make one Fortitude saving throw. The spiders fade away at the end of the round.

Arachnemancer Spell List

Arachnemancers choose their spells from the following list:

1st level—*cause fear, spider climb, spider friendship, summon monstrous spider I.*

2nd level—*spiderskin, summon monstrous spider II, summon spider swarm, web.*

3rd level—*giant vermin, neutralize poison, poison, summon monstrous spider III.*

4th level—*spider plague, summon monstrous spider IV, wall of webs.*

Several of the above spells are modified versions of spells described in Chapter 12 of the *Player's Handbook:*

Spider Friendship: As *animal friendship,* except it works only on monstrous spiders, and the spider's Int score is increased to 2 for the duration of the spell.

Spider Plague: As *insect plague,* except conjured insects are spiders (and do not fly).

Spiderskin: As *barkskin.*

Summon Monstrous Spider: As *summon monster,* except a monstrous spider is conjured and the duration is doubled (2 rounds/level): I—Small, II—Medium-size, III—Large, IV—Huge.

Summon Spider Swarm: As *summon swarm,* except conjured insects are spiders (and do not fly).

Wall of Webs: As *wall of iron,* including Hardness and hp, except the *wall* is twice as thick and made of concentrated webbing (but not flammable).

Concluding the Adventure (continued)

The vacuum in the Abyss created by Laveth's defeat is quickly filled. Even areas completely cleared out by the PCs fill up with more drow, driders, and demons (all servants of Lolth). It is impossible for the PCs to wipe out the entire Demonweb unless they destroy Lolth herself, but that's another adventure!

If the PCs escape with one or more of Laveth's power receptacles but Laveth survives, she sends her drow and demon allies through the *gate* in area **A10** of the Aranea Caves to recover that which was wrongfully taken from her. If the PCs destroy the *gate,* Laveth bides her time, consolidates her forces, and exacts revenge at a later date.

If the PCs return Alerian to his community in the woods, the elves are forever grateful. In their eyes, traveling to the Demonweb to save a friend is the most heroic thing one could possibly do. Elven bards, inspired by the PCs' heroic efforts, sing of the party's heroism for ages to come.

Lastly, if the PCs are successful in thwarting Laveth, they are really helping Lolth. That doesn't make it an evil act, but it might trouble the characters nonetheless.

If the PCs wish to press on further into the Demonweb, feel free to create a path off the map that leads into new sections, firmly controlled by Lolth. A good place for such a passage might be in area **D7**, **D16b**, or **D19**. The Demonweb is a vast place, filled with drow, driders, demons, spiders, and *gates* like the one found in area **D15**. Lolth's own vast palace lies at the center of the web, filled with demons, yochlol, and the most powerful drow servants imaginable, rivaling Laveth in power and ambition—for not just anyone can serve in the sanctum of their goddess. Ω

Monte Cook runs a game where all the player characters are elves with a lot of attitude. He can't wait until they run into their first vengeful party of dark elves. Cannot wait ...

Encounter Level Chart

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (EL) for all of the encounters in "The Harrowing."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
–	Male Drow Ftr6 (4)	14
	Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1)	
	Araneas (3)	
A2	Araneas (8)	10
	50-foot-deep Spiked Pit	5
A5	Araneas (4)	11
	Drider Wiz6 (1)	
A6	Tyeeinish, Half-Demon Aranea	14
	Huge Monstrous Spiders (4)	
A8	Ssoril, Hezrou	18
	Chazyk, Vrock	
	Alysthene, Succubus	
	Ilvadidra, Female Drow Clr9	
A10	Bebilith (1)	9
A11	Male Drow Ftr6 (7)	15
	Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (2)	
D1	Chaos Spectres (10)	14
D3a	**Stage 1**	14
	Male Drow Ftr6 (4)	
	Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1)	
	Blue Slaadi (2)	
	Green Slaadi (3)	
	Stage 2	12
	Male Drow Ftr6 (4)	
	Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1)	
	Red Slaad (1)	
	Stage 3	12
	Male Drow Ftr6 (4)	
	Male Drow Wiz5/Ftr3 (1)	
D3c	*Glyph of Warding*	2
	Tarestique, Female Drow Clr10	12
	Large Abyssal Monstrous Spiders (3)	
D4	Vrock (4)	18
	Hezrou (1)	
D5a	**Stage 1**	12
	Gray Slaadi (2)	
	Stage 2	14
	Male Drow Ftr6 (6)	
	Gray Slaadi (2)	
	Stage 3	12
	Male Drow Ftr6 (6)	
D5b	Ullistrin, Female Drow Vampire Clr11	15
	Poison Gas	4
D5c	Throne Trap	2
	Stage 1	13
	Male Drow Ftr6 (6)	
D6a	Vagdrioth, Male Drow Wiz12	12
D6b	*Symbol of Disintegration*	8
	Improved *Glyph of Warding*	7
D6c	Gray Render	8
	If Vagdrioth is present	+6
	If Ullistrin is present	+9
	If Ullistrin and Vagdrioth are present	+11
D7	Yurganthaor, Nalfeshnee	16
D8	**Stage 2**	13
	Blue Slaadi (6)	
D9a	Dragon Heads	9
D9b	Yochlol (3)	8
D9c	*Fire-trapped* Box (3 per room)	2/box
	Yochlol (3 per room)	8
D9d	Nulise, Female Drow Ftr7/Blk6	14
	Bloodlust, Fiendish Servant Raven	
D9f	*Glyphs of Warding* (2)	5/eye
D10	Retriever (1)	10
D11a	**Stages 1 and 2**	17
	Realthican, Male Drow Wiz6/Ara6	
	Tudrii, Drow Half-Demon Rog6/Ftr6	
	Large Abyssal Monstrous Spiders (2)	
	Stage 3	5
	Large Abyssal Monstrous Spiders (2)	
D12	Pool of Mind Devouring	7
	Driders (10)	14
D13a	**Stages 1 and 2**	15
	Helcav, Male Drow Wiz14	
	Oliclin, Bodak	
	Stage 3	8
	Oliclin, Bodak	
D14a	Hezrou (2)	16
D14b	Chaos Spectres (8)	13
D14c	The Captain (1)	15
D15	Iron Spider Golems (2)	15
D16a	30-foot-deep Acid Pit	12
D16c	Vil, Marilith	17
D17d	Gylgurdreg, Death Slaad	14
D18a	Gargantuan Abyssal Monstrous Spider	10
D18b	**Stages 1 and 2**	15
	Eaman, Male Drow Wiz3/Rgr2/Ara10	
D18c	**Stage 1**	18
	Laveth, Female Half-Drow Sor7/Ara10	
D18d	Poison Gas	8
D18e	Eight-Legged Spider Throne	14
	Stage 1 and 3	10
	Huge Abyssal Spider Ghosts (2)	
	Stage 2	23
	Laveth, Female Half-Drow Sor7/Ara10	
	Huge Abyssal Spider Ghosts (2)	
P1	Bell-Flower Blooms (24)	15
	Tendriculi (2)	
P2	Norded, Dwarf Head and Contraption	10
P3	Retriever	10
	Tzarrc, Vrock	13
	Ghuandan, Drider Wiz6	7
	Maldorl, Male Drow Ftr6	6
P4	**Stages 1 and 2**	
	Insanity Gas Trap	7
	Crystalline Spiders	10
	Stage 3	
	Insanity Gas Trap	7
	Laveth, Female Half-Drow Sor7/Ara10	18
	If one subordinate* is present	+7
	If two subordinates* are present	+9
	If three subordinates* are present	+10
	If four subordinates* are present	+11
	If five subordinates* are present	+12

* Laveth's subordinates include Ilvadidra, Realthican, Tudrii, Helcav, and Eaman.

Yochlol (New Monster)

Adapted by James Wyatt

Demon, Yochlol
Medium-Size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)

Hit Dice:	6d8+6 (33 hp)
Initiative:	+2 (Dex)
Speed:	30 ft. (climb 20 ft. in spider form)
AC:	*Humanoid form:* 17 (+2 Dex, +5 chainmail)
	Spider form: 16 (+2 Dex, -1 size, +5 natural)
	Amorphous form: 12 (+2 Dex)
Attacks:	*Humanoid form:* Short sword +11 melee; or Hand crossbow +8 ranged
	Spider form: Bite +11 melee
	Amorphous form: 8 tentacles +11 melee
Damage:	*Humanoid form:* Short sword 1d6+4; or Hand crossbow 1d4
	Spider form: Bite 1d8+4 plus poison
	Amorphous form: Tentacles 1d4+4
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.;
	Spider form: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Spell-like abilities, psionics, poison
Special Qualities:	*Gaseous form;* electricity, poison, and gas immunity; fire resistance 20; damage reduction 10/+2; spell resistance 15; telepathy
Saves:	Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +7
Abilities:	Str 19, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 16
Skills:	Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Concentration +7, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (drow religion) +11, Listen +11, Spot +11
Feats:	Blind-Fight, Combat Casting
Climate/Terrain:	Any land or underground
Organization:	Solitary or Brood (1d4+1)
Challenge Rating:	5
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range:	7-12 HD (Medium-Size)

The yochlol, also called Handmaidens of Lolth, serve the demoness throughout the planes. They exist only to serve their dark mistress.

In their natural form, yochlol resemble 6-foot-tall heaps of reeking slime, with eight powerful tentacles and a single, glaring, red eye. However, they can freely shift between this form and three others: a beautiful human or elf (usually drow) woman, a 10-foot-diameter black spider, or a gaseous cloud. Changing shape is a free action that they can perform as often as once per round. If a yochlol wears armor in its human or elf form, the armor falls away when the yochlol assumes any other form.

Yochlol speak Abyssal. Unlike other demons, they do not summon their own kind.

Combat

Yochlol on the Material Plane are most commonly encountered in their humanoid or spider forms.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): Yochlol can use the following spell-like powers at will, as 8th-level sorcerers (DC 13 + spell level): *charm person, darkness, desecrate, spider climb, stone shape, teleport without error, web.*

Psionics (Sp): Yochlol can use the following psionic powers at will, as 8th-level sorcerers (DC 13 + spell level): *domination, detect thoughts, mind blank.*

Spider Poison (Ex): The bite attack of a yochlol in spider form is poisonous: Fortitude save (DC 14); initial damage 1d6 points of temporary Constitution, secondary damage 2d6 points of temporary Constitution damage.

Gaseous Form (Ex): Yochlol can transform themselves into a large column of gas, 10 feet tall and 5 feet wide. This form is exactly like that produced by a *gaseous form* spell. Creatures that come into contact with the yochlol in *gaseous form* are affected as if by a *stinking cloud* spell.

Telepathy (Su): Yochlol can communicate telepathically with any creature (within 100 feet) that has a language.

Illustration by Jim Roslof

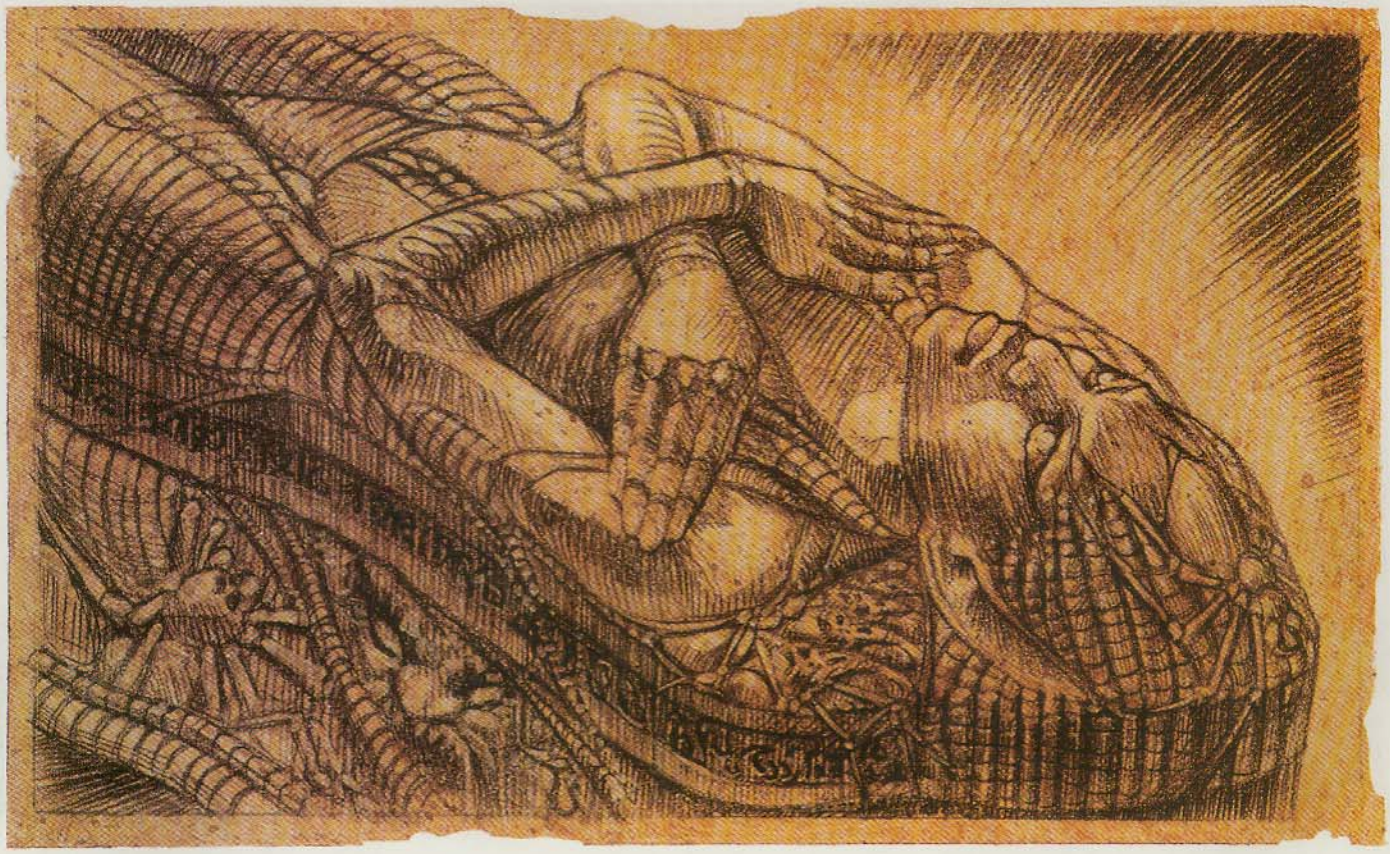
ILLUSTRATION #1

ILLUSTRATION #2

ILLUSTRATION #3

ILLUSTRATION #4

ILLUSTRATION #5



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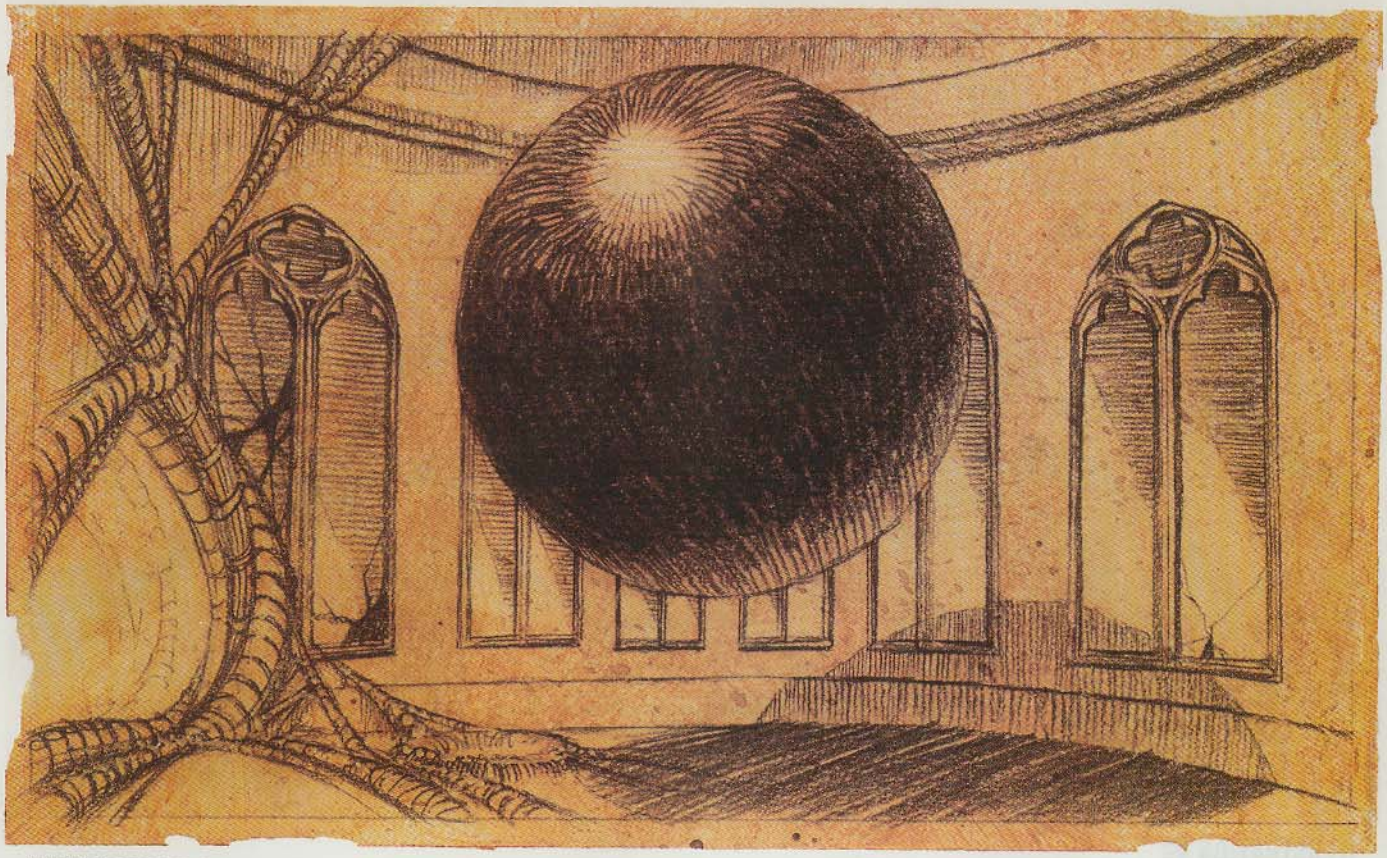

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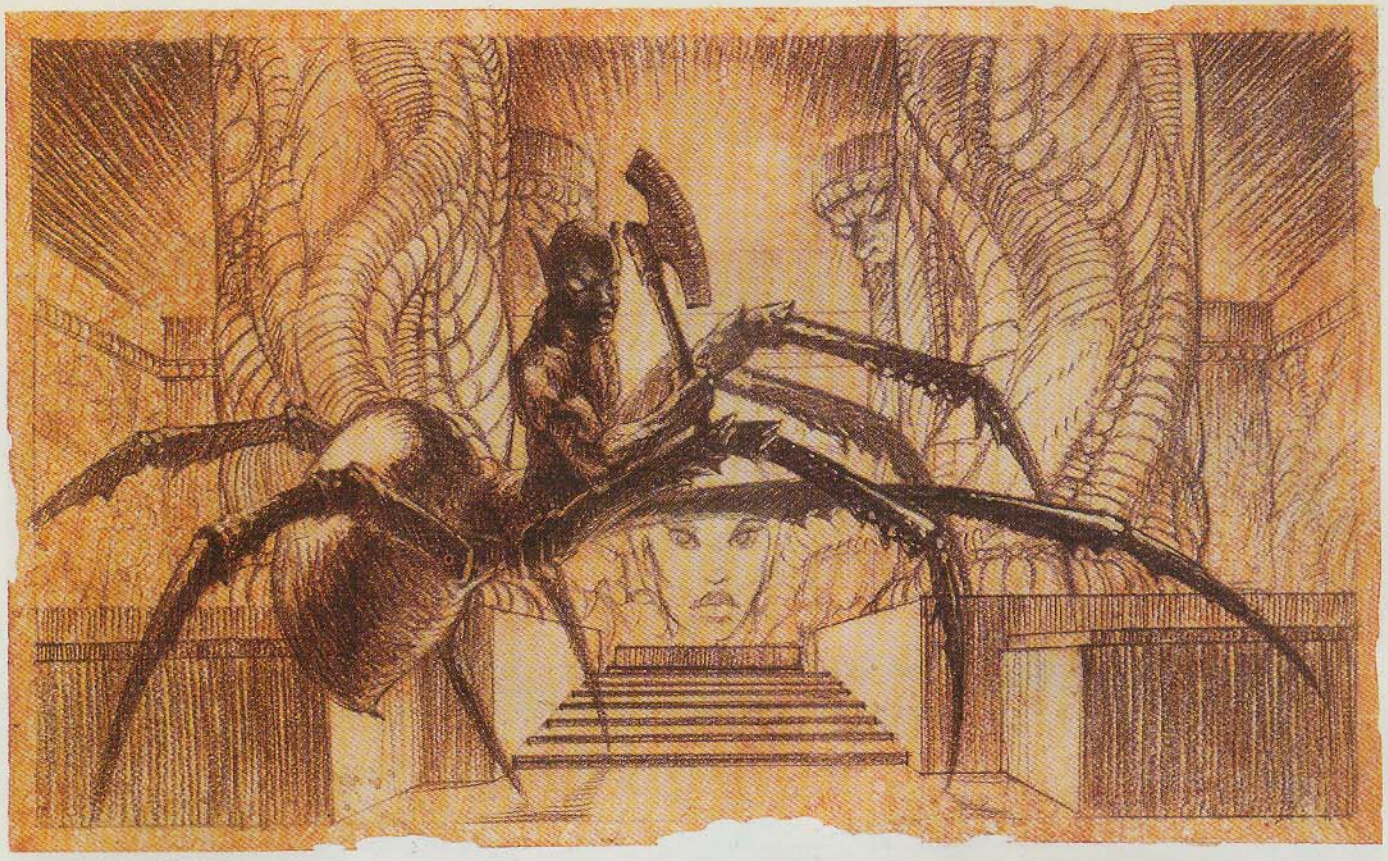

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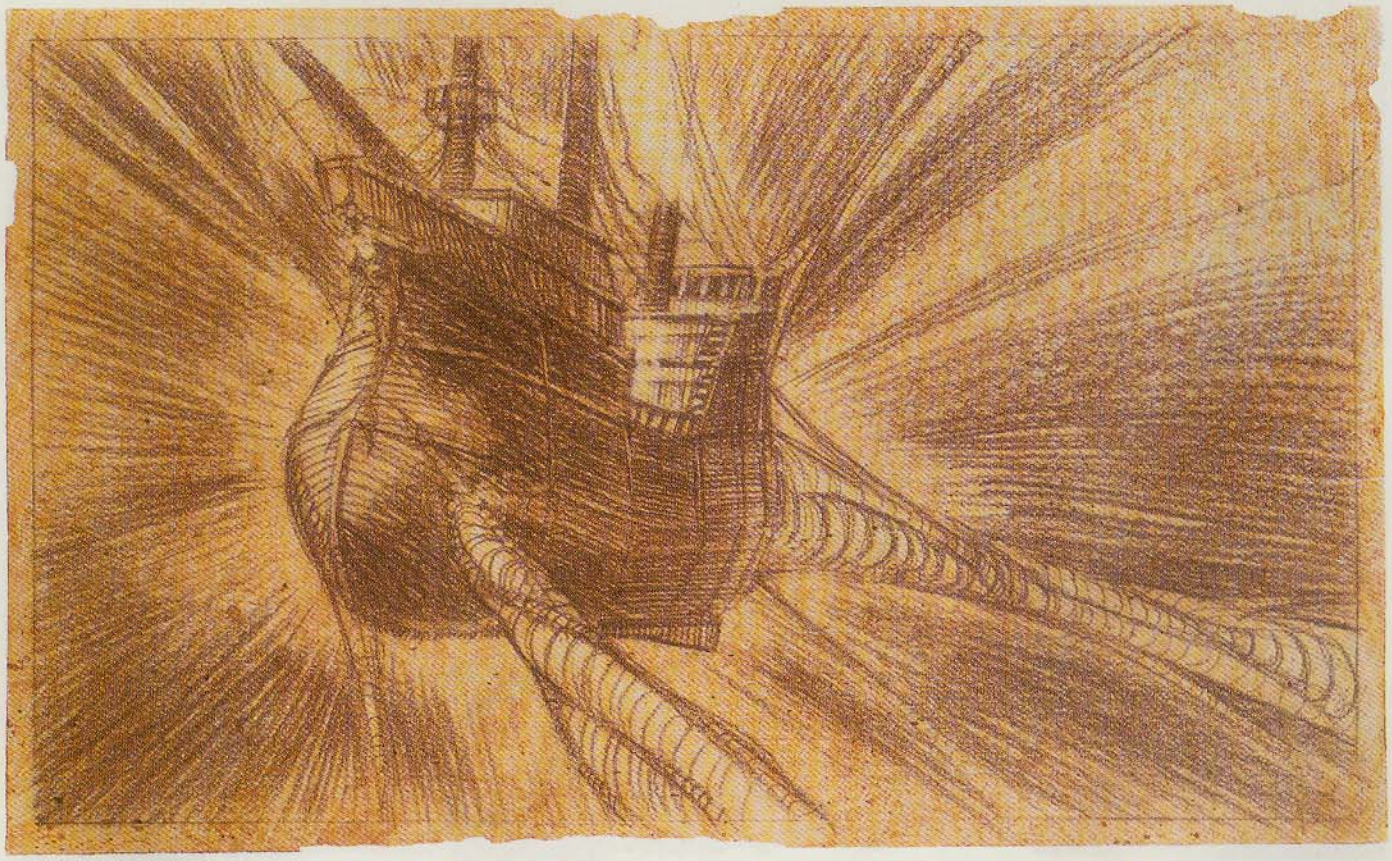

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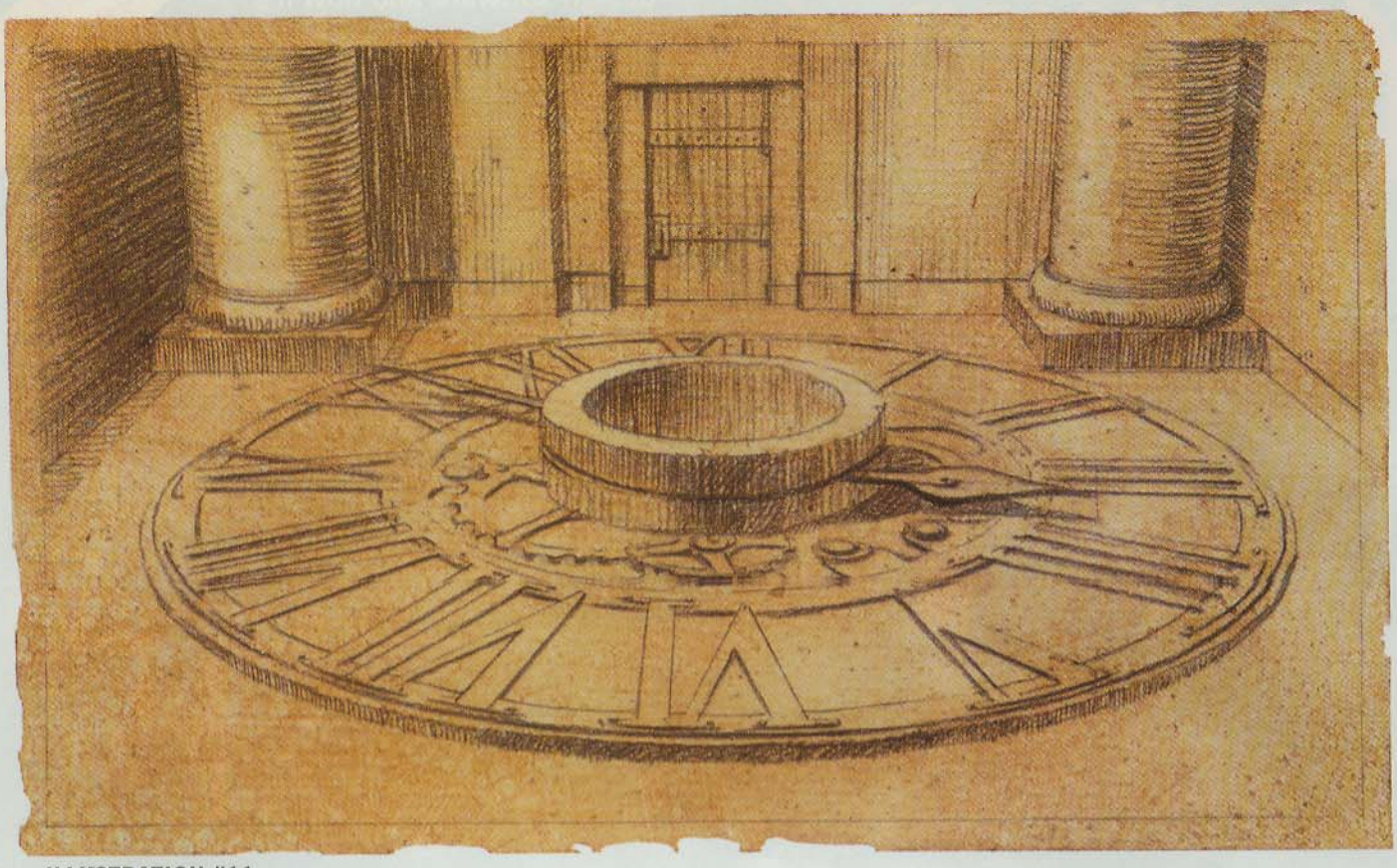

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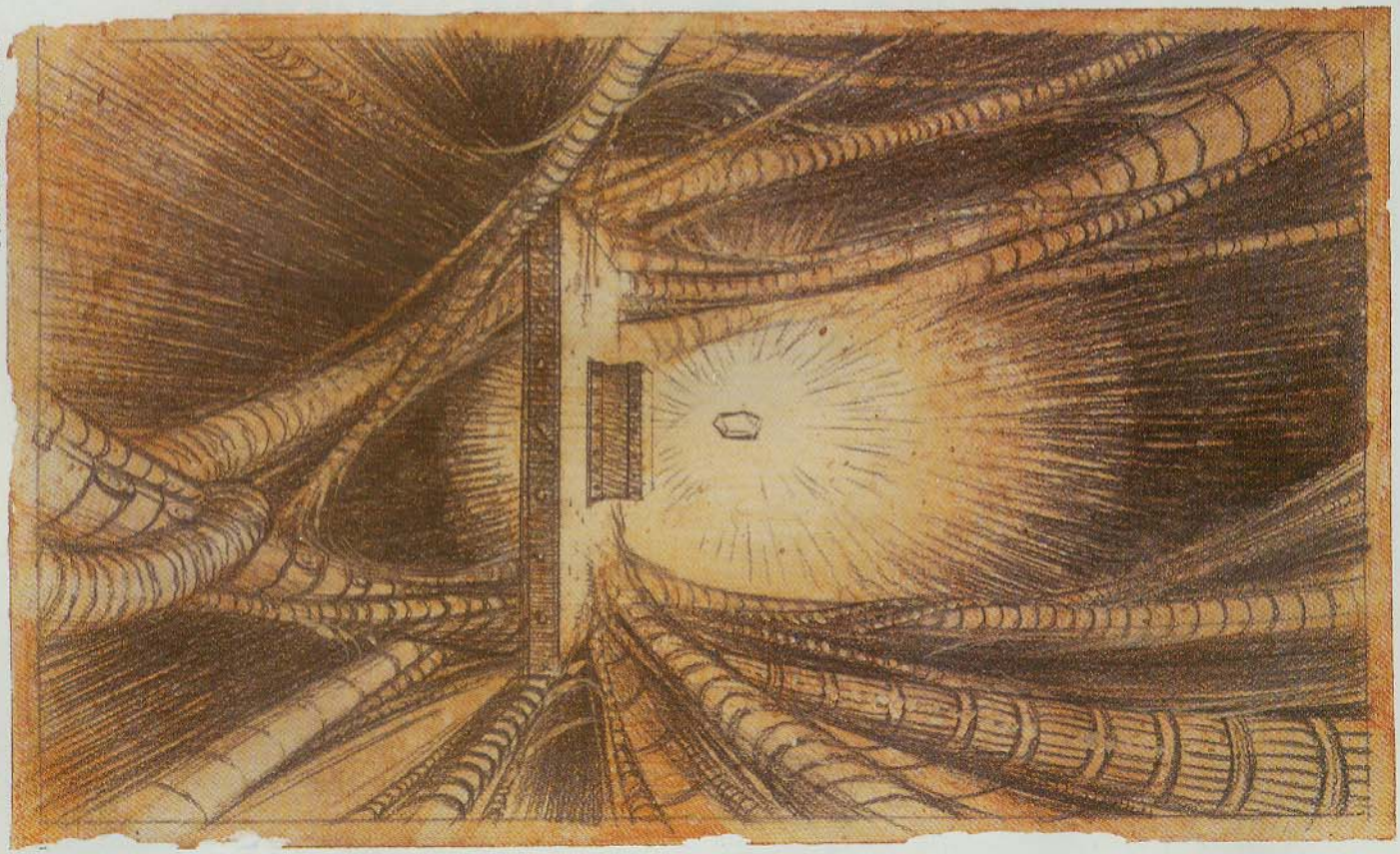
ILLUSTRATION #12



Demonclaw

Where the Knight Falls

by Peter R. Hopkins

artwork by Michael Weaver • cartography by Christopher West

"Demonclaw" is a short D&D adventure designed for four 5th-level characters. Those who survive the adventure should advance to within striking distance of 6th level. See the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for ways to modify the encounters to suit parties of lower and higher level. This module assumes that the PCs have some means of flying or crossing a watery expanse, and at least one PC should possess a magic weapon of +1 enchantment or better.

Magic Items | Monsters | Non-Player Characters (NPCs) | Objects | Settlements | Traps

Adventure Background

On the southern fringe of the Kingdom of Nyrond, tucked among the dark cliffs that confine Relmor Bay, stands the small coastal city of Wragby. Until recently, the city has profited from trade with its coastal neighbors (Ahlissa, Onnwal, and Urnst), but recent pirate escapades have jeopardized Wragby's reputation as a safe port. Devastated by war, the Kingdom of Nyrond has been unable to maintain a navy mighty enough to curtail the pirate threat. To help guard the trade lanes, King Lynwerd dispatched an emissary to meet with the wizard Fhelzor Hornstaff and beg his assistance. The ruling house had called upon Fhelzor in the past to aid Nyrond against threats from the sea. On one occasion several years ago, Fhelzor used his magic to drive away a fierce dragon turtle that had taken to nesting in Fairwind Bay. Now Nyrond needed his help to deal with the pirates.

Six miles south of Wragby, jutting up from the bay like the half-shattered claw of some horrible demon from the depths, is the stony crag that sailors have dubbed the Demonclaw. Nestled in the palm of this ominous rock formation is a single pale spire: the tower of the wizard Fhelzor Hornstaff. King Lynwerd's emissary—a half-orc paladin of Heironeous named Onzmeer, accompanied by his loyal human squire Varlad—rode a hippogriff to the Demonclaw to meet with Fhelzor Hornstaff one week ago. When Onzmeer failed to return, a high-ranking cleric of Heironeous in Nyrond's capital cast a *commune* spell and learned, to her chagrin, that Onzmeer was dead. (So far, the clerics have been unable to determine the fate of Onzmeer's squire.) King Lynwerd has commanded that new emissaries be sent to find out what has happened to Onzmeer and recover his body so that he can be *raised*.

As King Lynwerd fears, Fhelzor killed Onzmeer. While experimenting with a tome of spells sold to him by a colleague, Fhelzor inadvertently summoned the book's guardian: a glabrezu demon. He tried to banish the demon back to the Abyss using a spell from the book, but the spell was beyond his abilities, and the magic failed him. In exchange for sparing his life, the demon demanded that Fhelzor surrender the book at once. Knowing better than to trust the word of a demon and unwilling to let the demon have its prize, Fhelzor destroyed the tome. In so doing, he unknowingly triggered a powerful magic ward that caused him and the demon to fuse into one being. Fhelzor's demeanor and physical form have been irrevocably altered by the "accident." In addition to possessing the glabrezu's chaotic evil alignment, his left arm now resembles a glabrezu's pincered claw. The left side of his body has also been twisted into a hideously demonic form.

When Onzmeer beheld Fhelzor's new form, he attacked the wizard at once. Fhelzor slew the paladin with his newfound spell-like abilities and confined Onzmeer's squire to the tower dungeon, inside a cell surrounded by a permanent *nondetection* spell.

Fhelzor's transformation coupled with Onzmeer's bloody death have reduced Varlad to a quivering, frightful wreck. The boy remains Fhelzor's prisoner. Consumed by fear and nightmares, his only hope is that someone will free him.

Adventure Synopsis

The characters are hired by clerics loyal to King Lynwerd of Nyrond to investigate the fate of Onzmeer, a half-orc paladin of Heironeous, and his human squire. Although the clerics believe that the paladin is dead, the cause of his death remains a mystery. The PCs know only that Onzmeer was sent to meet with Fhelzor Hornstaff and ask the wizard's help in repelling a pirate threat. Although Fhelzor has served Nyrond well in the past, the clerics of Heironeous suspect that he might be somehow responsible for the half-orc paladin's death.

The PCs must journey to the Demonclaw to confront Fhelzor, recover the remains of the fallen half-orc paladin, and free Varlad from the wizard's dungeon.

Scaling the Adventure

"Demonclaw" is designed for a party of four 5th-level PCs. Here are a few ways to modify the adventure for different levels of play:

For Lower-level Groups

- Fhelzor's total levels as a wizard should equal 3 + the average party level. Remove any spell-like ability possessed by Fhelzor that is equivalent to a spell of 3 + the average PC level or higher. For instance, for 1st-level PCs, remove all of Fhelzor's spell-like abilities similar to spells of 4th level or higher, such as *confusion* and *reverse gravity*. Replace Fhelzor's *wand of lightning bolts* with a wand of *Melf's acid arrows* or similar item. To determine Fhelzor's new EL, take his level as a wizard and add 2.
- Make Glygul and Myrlog ordinary homonculi (as described in the *Monster Manual*) instead of advanced homonculi.
- Remove the *sepia snake sigils* from the tower windows, and reduce the number of doors sealed by *arcane lock* spells.

For Higher-level Groups

- Fhelzor's total levels as a wizard should equal 3 + the average party level. If the PCs are 8th level or higher, allow Fhelzor to use his *power word, stun* spell-like ability 7/day. If the characters are 10th level or higher, allow Fhelzor to summon tanar'ri as a spell-like ability: Once per day, he can attempt to summon 4d10 dretches or 1d2 vrocks with a 50% chance of success. To determine Fhelzor's new EL against parties of 8th level or higher, take his level as a wizard and add 3.
- Give Glygul and Myrlog *stoneskin* and *permanent invisibility* spells.
- Consider giving Fhelzor a *lesser planar ally*, such as a vrock demon. Also consider giving him a *wand of lightning bolts* cast at a higher level (say, 9th).

Awarding Treasure

This module contains roughly 30,000 gp worth of treasure and magic items (not including Onzmeer's possessions). If you modify the challenges in the adventure, you should also adjust the amount of treasure. To determine the appropriate amount of treasure, multiply 6,000 gp by the party's starting level. Thus, if you're running this adventure for 9th-level PCs and increasing the challenges to match, the module should contain approximately 54,000 gp in treasure (including magic items).

Beginning the Adventure

The PCs are summoned to a meeting by clerics of Heironeous and asked to perform an important task in the name of King Lynwerd of the Kingdom of Nyrond. Read or paraphrase the following to begin the adventure:

> The kingdom of Nyrond has seen better days. Once a land of promise and strength, Nyrond has felt the cold hand of war for too long, and honest working folk are now subject to high taxes, banditry, piracy, and worse. The kingdom has fallen on hard times and has more troubles than it surely deserves.
>
> You have been summoned by the clerics of Heironeous to perform an important task. In meeting with the clerics, you learn many things:
>
> Pirates have been preying on ships entering and leaving Relmor Bay. This has hurt coastal cities such as Oldred and Wragby that rely on overseas trading. To help quell the pirate threat, King Lynwerd sent one of his most esteemed emissaries, a half-orc paladin of Heironeous named Onzmeer the Bold, to petition aid from a reclusive wizard who lives off the coast of Wragby, on an island in the middle of Relmor Bay. The wizard, Fhelzor Hornstaff, has helped Nyrond on several occasions. Several months ago, he used his magic to drive a dragon turtle out of Fairwind Bay.
>
> Onzmeer the Bold and his loyal squire left for Fhelzor's island seven days ago and were expected back three days ago. They have not returned. Worse, a recent casting of the *commune* spell has revealed that Onzmeer is dead. The clerics know only that his remains can be found on the wizard's island. They have been unable to ascertain the fate of the paladin's squire, a young human boy named Varlad. The king has demanded that someone be sent to question the wizard and determine the cause of the paladin's death and the fate of Onzmeer's squire. The clerics also ask that you to retrieve the paladin's remains so that he can be *raised*.

The PCs can question the clerics further. The clerics know the following bits of information:

- Fhelzor Hornstaff is a recluse. His tower lies six miles south of the port city of Wragby on a rocky island called the Demonclaw. The island is so named because it resembles the half-shattered claw of some horrible beast.
- Onzmeer and his squire left the capital city astride the paladin's mount—a hippogriff named Maelstrom. The paladin stopped at the temple of Heironeous in Wragby before continuing on to the Demonclaw. There might be information in Wragby concerning the half-orc paladin's fate.
- Onzmeer's squire, Varlad, is an eleven-year-old boy. The paladin has been training the boy since he was seven. The two were best friends.
- Fhelzor has no known cohorts. Most people leave him alone, and he seldom ventures far from his tower. The tower itself is a single pale spire nestled in the "palm" of the claw-shaped island. At night, magical lights illuminate the tower, creating a beacon that can be seen by ships from miles away.
- Fhelzor is a solemn, middle-aged man with unkempt red hair. His longevity has spawned rumors that he possesses some elven blood. More likely he has used potions or other magic to prolong his lifespan.

The clerics remind PCs that those who cannot fly to the Demonclaw will probably need to finagle a boat in Wragby (as detailed in the "Wragby" section below).

Possible Rewards

In exchange for the PCs' help, the clerics offer the following as possible rewards:

- An audience with King Lynwerd of Nyrond. (The king rarely grants audiences without a recommendation from those he holds in highest regard, like the clerics of Heironeous.)
- A single magic item, chosen from the following list: *candle of invocation, ioun stone* (incandescent blue), *+2 scimitar, +1 battleaxe of throwing, +3 bracers of armor, bag of holding* (Bag 3), *minor circlet of blasting, pearl of power* (3rd-level spell), *goggles of night*.
- A signed letter of recommendation to a local academy, guild, martial training school, monastery, or similar location.

- A box containing six *potions of cure serious wounds*. As a sign of good faith, the clerics are willing to give the PCs half of the potions up front.
- A solemn promise to render a future clerical service at no charge to the party.

Wragby

The small city of Wragby lies on the southern coast of Nyrond overlooking Relmor Bay. The PCs' journey to Wragby should be uneventful, whether they travel by land or air.

PCs have a couple reasons to visit Wragby before setting out for Fhelzor's island: They might need a boat to reach the Demonclaw, or they might want to consult with the clerics of Heironeous in Wragby to see whether they know more about Onzmeer's fate.

If the PCs visit the city's wharf to borrow a boat, they encounter some of the local fishermen who advise them to stay away from the Demonclaw. The fishermen are more than happy to share old wives' tales about the Demonclaw being cursed. They think that Fhelzor beguiles unwanted visitors and forces them to leap off the island's cliffs to their deaths.

The cost of renting a 4-person boat with two oars is 1 sp per day. The cost of renting an 8-person boat with four oars is 5 sp per day. PCs can purchase other supplies in the city at prices listed in Chapter 7 of the *Player's Handbook*.

The temple of Heironeous in Wragby is a modest stone cathedral on the eastern edge of town, perched atop a low rise that provides a glorious view of the rest of the city and the bay. The temple is run by Archimus Lightbringer, a 4th-level human cleric, and Gendel the Bold, a 3rd-level human paladin. Both seem quite distraught when told the news about Onzmeer and Varlad, and a successful Sense Motive check (DC 20) reveals that their distress is sincere.

Archimus and Gendel help the PCs any way they can but cannot leave the temple. They know only that Onzmeer and Varlad arrived at the temple seven days ago and stayed just long enough to grab a bite to eat, feed the paladin's hippogriff mount, and pray before the altar of Heironeous.

Wragby (Small City): Conventional; AL LN; 15,000-gp limit; Assets 1,500,000 gp*; Population 8,250 (37% human, 20% halfling, 18% dwarf, 10% gnome, 7% elf, 5% half-orc, 3% half-elf).

* Note that the city's assets are considerably lower than most cities of equal size; this is because Wragby's resources have been depleted by war or lost to pirates.

Authority Figure: Lord Feerin Callistor (male human Ari3).

Important NPCs: Archimus Lightbringer, cleric of Heironeous (male human Clr4); Gendel, paladin of Heironeous (male human Pal3); others created by the DM.

Notes: Wragby is a crescent-shaped city of tightly packed wood and stone buildings that hugs the rocky shore of Relmor Bay. Well-traveled and well-guarded trade roads lead from the city to the distant cities of Oldred to the east, Rel Mord (the capital of Nyrond) to the north, and Beetu to the west.

The Demonclaw

Rising 220 feet out of Relmor Bay, The Demonclaw is a natural rock formation carved by the tides and the slow passage of time. Fhelzor's 200-foot-tall tower is sculpted from pale, seamless stone and stands in the hollowed-out center of the island. The base of Fhelzor's tower is lit by sixteen *continual flame* spells spaced equidistantly around the tower's circumference. The magical lights illuminate the tower, allowing vessels to see the tower on foggy nights and thus avoid collisions with the Demonclaw.

Whether the characters approach the Demonclaw by sea or air, read or paraphrase the following description:

> Rising up from the sea is a rocky crag over 200 feet tall. The formation juts out of the water like the petrified claw of some great, sunken beast. Nestled between the half-shattered fingers of this great claw is a pale stone tower, the base of which is brightly illuminated. A little less than halfway up the tower is an arched bridge connecting the structure to a small landing platform carved out of the rock.
>
> It is clear that the tower was never meant to be reached from the water, as there are no places to moor a boat.

PCs who fly to the island can land safely atop a stone platform (area 4). An arched bridge connects the platform to the second floor of the tower. PCs can also land at the base of the tower and enter through the doors on the first floor (area 1). The tower's base is nestled in the island's rock "palm," a hollow basin surrounded on all sides by naturally hewn walls. PCs can also enter through one of many tower windows, although these are magically warded (see below).

There is no place to tether a boat and no easy way to reach the tower from the sea. Climbing the slick, sea-worn walls of the Demonclaw requires multiple Climb checks, one for each round of movement spent scaling the island's sheer cliffs. (To calculate the DC, consult the Climb skill check description in the *Player's Handbook*.)

Fhelzor's Tower

The tower is carved from a naturally magical stone that is impervious to spells that alter its shape, including *stone shape*. The walls, floors, ceilings, and secret doors are also impervious to attacks from nonmagical weapons.

Doors: The tower doors are all *arcane locked* (adding +10 to the DC to break them open) and made of heavy, iron-bound oak with large metal hinges. All doors open into rooms; a door that connects two rooms always opens into the smaller room.

Iron-bound, *Arcane Locked* Oak Doors: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break DC 28 (18 without *arcane lock*).

Illumination: All rooms, unless otherwise noted, are lit by *everburning torches* in sconces (as indicated on the maps).

Window Traps (EL 2): The tower has eleven narrow windows, each fitted with a single pane of frosted glass that swings open on delicate steel hinges. The glass is nontransparent. Carefully etched into the outside surface of each window is an ornate symbol. These runes are actually *sepia snake sigils*—one per window. Anyone approach within 5 feet of a window from the outside sees the sigil and is attacked by the spell. Any character who fails a Reflex saving throw (DC 17) is immobilized by the spell and falls. The stasis field surrounding the PC does not protect against falling or other forms of damage.

Shattering the window (Hardness 1; hp 2) from a safe distance destroys the sigil and allows safe entry. A successfully cast *dispel magic* (DC 20) removes the *sepia snake sigil*.

Sepia Snake Sigil: CR 2; target immobilized for 1d4+1 days (and might suffer falling damage), Reflex saving throw (DC 17) negates; Search (DC special); Disable Device (n/a).

First Floor

1. Entrance Foyer. A handsomely embroidered rug depicting a silver unicorn covers the floor of this short hall. A pair of *everburning torches* are mounted on opposite walls.

2. Closets. These rooms are identical. Each has several hooks affixed to the interior walls. Just inside the doorway sits a low shelf designed to hold boots and shoes. An *everburning torch* is mounted to the wall opposite the door. Both chambers are empty.

3. Wizardly Meeting Hall. Before his transformation, Fhelzor belonged to a secret, worldwide guild of wizards and scholars, and this room was used to host guild meetings. A mahogany table flanked by ten cushioned chairs dominates the room. At the end of the table stands an eleventh chair, its backrest shaped like a unicorn. Hidden in the alcove behind the chair is the **Creature**.

The semicircular northern wall is lined with five tapestries depicting conjuration symbols and glyphs. Four more tapestries depicting pastoral landscapes adorn the southern corners. Fhelzor's chair is detailed under **Treasure**.

The west staircase leads up to the second floor (area 9A). The east staircase descends to the dungeon (area 12).

Creature (EL 3): Glygul, a surprisingly resilient homonculus crafted by Fhelzor, lurks in the northern alcove, peering at intruders from behind the tapestry. Once it spots the PCs, it telepathically alerts Fhelzor to the heroes' presence. The next round, Fhelzor makes preparations to confront the PCs; see area 10 for his tactics.

The homonculus communicates using a form of sign language devised by Fhelzor, although PCs making a successful Intelligence check (DC 22) can correctly interpret its gestures.

Killing Glygul deals 2d10 points of damage to Fhelzor. However, the homonculus flees if reduced to half its hit points. If its best route of escape is through a window, it smashes through the frosted pane, flies up to the tower rooftop, and descends the chimney into area 10.

Glygul, Advanced Homonculus (1): CR 1*; Tiny Construct (2-ft. wingspan); HD 4d10; hp 22; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (good); AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 size); Atk +2 melee (1d6-1 and poison, bite); Face 2½ ft. × 2½ feet; Reach 0 ft.; SA poison; SQ construct; AL CE (formerly LN); SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 15, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7.

* Award double the normal XP for defeating the homonculus, due to its greater Hit Dice.

Glygul's coloration is similar to the pale stone walls of Fhelzor's tower. When hiding against the wall, it gets a +4 racial bonus to Hide checks.

Treasure: The right arm of Fhelzor's chair contains a secret button that requires a successful Search skill check (DC 20) to locate. Pressing the secret button causes a slot to open in the arm, releasing a 7-inch-long birchwood *wand of hold person* (cast at 5th-level; 18 charges; command word "Hold!"). Fhelzor kept the *wand* handy during guild meetings in case his guests became hostile or unruly.

Second Floor

4. Landing Platform. This flat, stone platform embedded in the side of the Demonclaw is connected to Fhelzor's tower by an arched bridge and is large enough to land a griffon, hippogriff, or similar mount. The landing platform is 60 feet above the ground floor of the tower and 160 feet above sea level.

5. Main Hall. Two tapestries depicting processions hang on opposite walls of this torchlit hall. The western tapestry depicts a silver dragon and its young ambling from left to right (toward the northern set of doors). The eastern tapestry depicts a pack of fiends charging from left to right (toward the southern doors). The value of the tapestries is given under **Treasure** below.

Above the northern doors is a 1-foot-wide stone ledge, upon which perches the **Creature**. The wall behind the ledge contains a small secret door just large enough for a Tiny creature to slip through into area 8. The homonculus's secret door can be detected with a successful Search skill check (DC 20).

Creature (EL 3): Myrlog, another one of Fhelzor's homonculus constructs, perches above the northern doors and watches as intruders enter the hall. It uses its telepathy to alert Fhelzor to the party's presence, then uses the small secret portal above the northern doors to enter area 8 and fly up the fireplace chimney to area 10 (where it awaits further instructions). Myrlog avoids a direct confrontation with the PCs at this time.

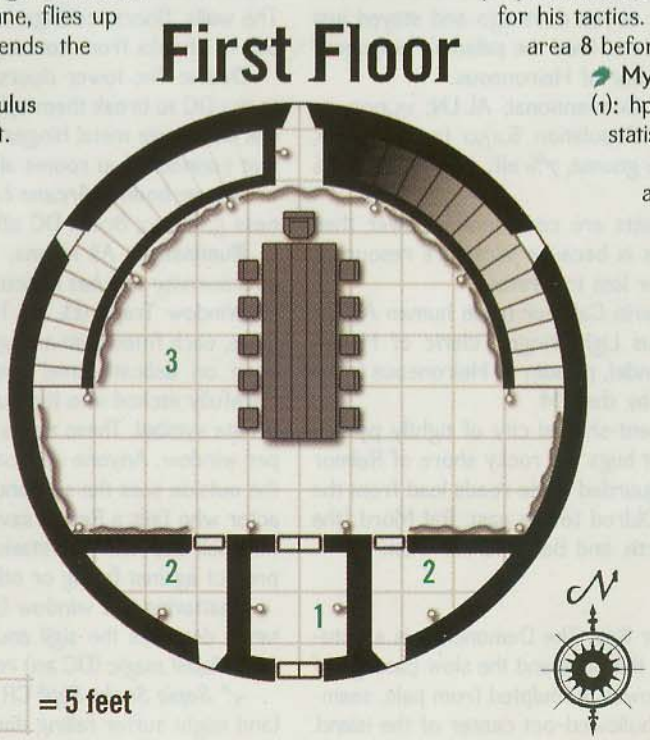
The round after he is alerted by Myrlog, Fhelzor makes preparations to confront the PCs; see area 10 for his tactics. He waits until the PCs enter area 8 before appearing.

Myrlog, Advanced Homonculus (1): hp 20; see area 3 for complete statistics.

Treasure: The two tapestries are worth 200 gp each.

6. Guest Bedchamber. This room contains two soft beds, a small writing desk with matching chair, a tall wardrobe, and an *everburning torch*. The wardrobe is currently empty.

7. Fhelzor's Bedchamber. This room contains a bed, a tall wardrobe, a writing desk with matching chair, and a shelf of books selected from the wizard's library (area 10). The books are mundane tomes dealing with all sorts of topics (gems,



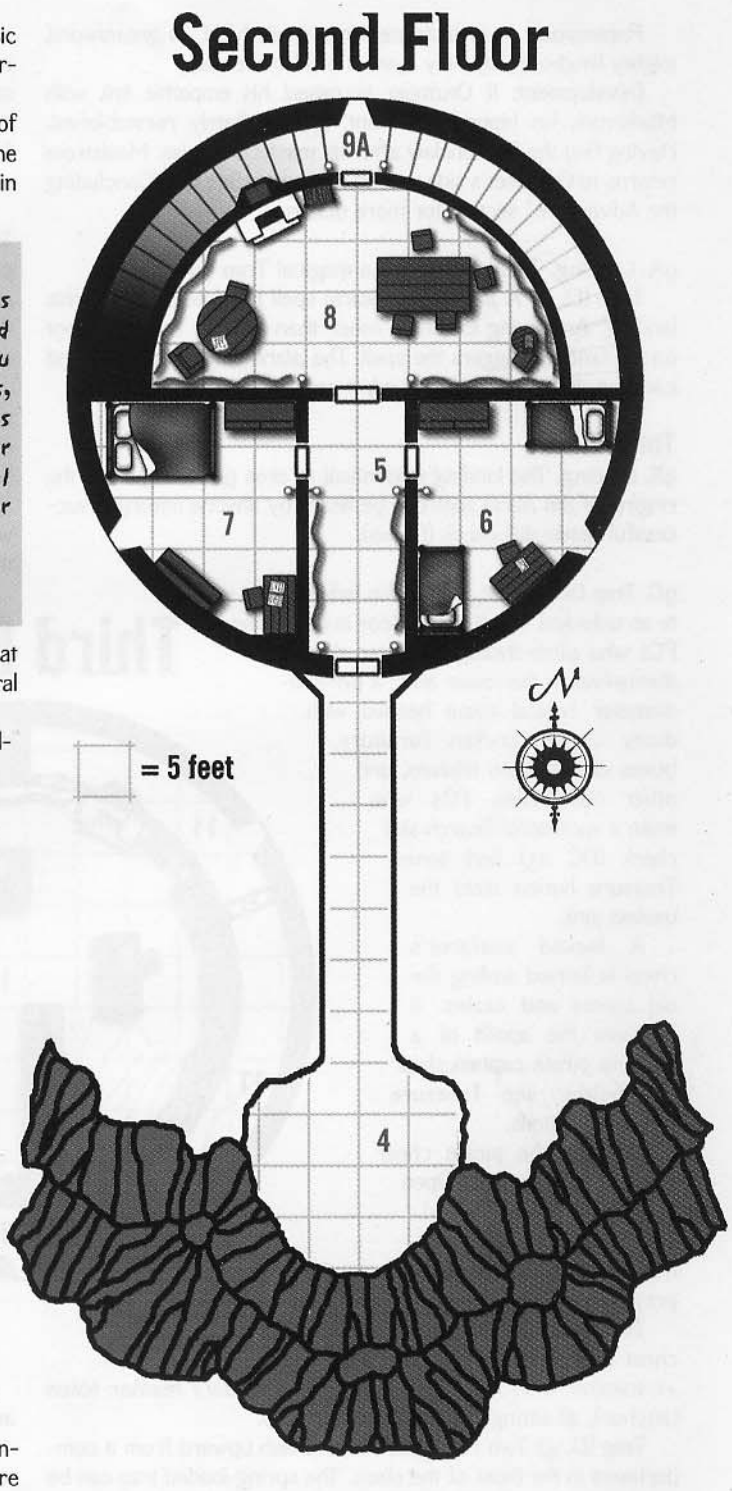
herbs, cooking recipes, birds, sailing, astronomy, and basic alchemy). Any of the books might fetch a few coins at the market, but none is particularly valuable.

The writing desk contains some quills, ink jars, and pieces of parchment. Among the scraps of parchment scattered atop the desk is the following letter written by Fhelzor to a colleague in Greyhawk City:

> Meredain,
>
> I recently purchased a book of conjurer's spells from a colleague of ours in Greyhawk City. (I need not tell you who, as I'm sure you know already, you crafty devil!) The book has a few lingering wards, but nothing I can't handle. Some of the book's spells mystify me, however, and I would appreciate your assistance in translating these pages. In exchange, I will gladly share whatever knowledge and power the book contains. I await your swift response.
>
> Your ally,
> Fhelzor

The book mentioned in the letter is the same one that unleashed the glabrezu. Fhelzor's letter is mixed with several pieces of blank parchment and used scrolls.

Fhelzor's wardrobe contains simple apparel as well as a collection of more distinguished robes, cloaks, and slippers.



8. Kitchen. This semicircular room has a 15-foot-high ceiling. The walls are hidden behind four tapestries (see **Treasure** below). Set into the north wall near a doorway is a blackened fireplace, next to which sits an open trunk half-filled with firewood and kindling. This kitchen holds three tables: a circular preparation table covered with flour, spices, and crumbled bread; a rectangular serving table circled by four wooden chairs; and a corner table with a leather-bound recipe book resting on it and another chair nearby.

Lying in the middle of the floor is the corpse of Onzmeer the half-orc paladin. His wounds suggest that he was struck by three bolts of electricity, and he sports horrible burn marks on his chest and back. (He was surprised by Fhelzor and hit multiple times by his *wand of lightning bolts*.) Scattered around the fallen paladin are two orc skulls and dozens of bleached bones—the remains of two *animated* skeletons that served Fhelzor as cooks. The half-orc paladin destroyed Fhelzor's servants after entering the kitchen.

In the event Onzmeer is successfully *raised* from the dead, his statistics are presented under **Creature** below.

If the PCs were seen entering this level by Fhelzor's homonculus in area 5, he waits until they've entered this room before appearing and attacking. See area 10 for a description of the wizard's tactics.

Creature (EL 5): Onzmeer has a prominent jaw, dark eyes, and long black hair pulled back in a ponytail. With his equipment and armor, he weighs 315 lbs. PCs who succeed in getting him back to the temple of Heironeous should receive experience points as if they'd defeated Onzmeer in honorable combat; that is, treat him as a CR 5 encounter for XP purposes.

Onzmeer the Bold, Male Half-orc Pal5 (Heironeous): CR 5; Medium-Size Humanoid (6 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 5d10+10; hp 47; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (+8 with *+1 breastplate*, large shield); Atk +6 melee (2d6+1/crit 19-20, +1 greatsword); or +5 ranged (1d8+4/crit ×3, mighty longbow [+4]); SA smite evil (+2 to attack roll, +5 to damage roll); SQ *detect evil, lay on hands* (10 hp/day), divine health, aura of courage, *remove disease* 1/week, turn undead 5/day, special mount (see **Development** below); AL LG; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 19, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills: Handle Animal +6, Heal +8, Knowledge (religion) +3, Ride +4. *Feats:* Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat.

Spell (1): 1st—*bless*.

Possessions: +1 breastplate, large steel shield, *+1 greatsword,* mighty longbow [+4], holy symbol of Heironeous.

Development: If Onzmeer is *raised,* his empathic link with Maelstrom, his hippogriff mount, is immediately reestablished. Having fled the Demonclaw after its master's demise, Maelstrom returns to Onzmeer's side with all due haste. See the "Concluding the Adventure" section for more details.

9A. Landing. This landing has a magical **Trap** on it.

Trap (EL 1): A *permanent alarm* spell has been cast on this landing. Any living creature other than Fhelzor that sets foot on the landing triggers the spell. The *alarm* rings in area 10 and can't be detected or disarmed; it can be *dispelled,* however.

Third Floor

9B. Landing. This landing is identical to area 9A, except that the ringing of the *alarm* spell can be heard by anyone making a successful Listen skill check (DC 10).

9C. Trap Door/Attic. A wooden ladder leads up to an unlocked wooden trap door in the ceiling. PCs who climb through the trap door find themselves in the tower attic: a 60-foot-diameter conical room heaped with dusty crates, broken furniture, boxes of worthless trinkets, and other collectibles. PCs who make a successful Search skill check (DC 25) find some **Treasure** buried amid the useless junk.

A locked seafarer's chest is buried among the old boxes and crates. It contains the spoils of a ruthless pirate captain slain by Fhelzor; see **Treasure** below for details.

Opening the pirate chest requires a successful Open Locks skill check (DC 21). Doing so also activates the **Trap** (unless it is properly disarmed).

Treasure: Inside the chest are several items: a *+1 scimitar,* a *+1 hand crossbow,* and a *Quaal's feather token* (anchor), all sitting atop a bed of 500 gp.

Trap (EL 4): Two rotary saw blades lash upward from a compartment in the front of the chest. The spring-loaded trap can be reset with a successful Disable Device skill check (DC 24).

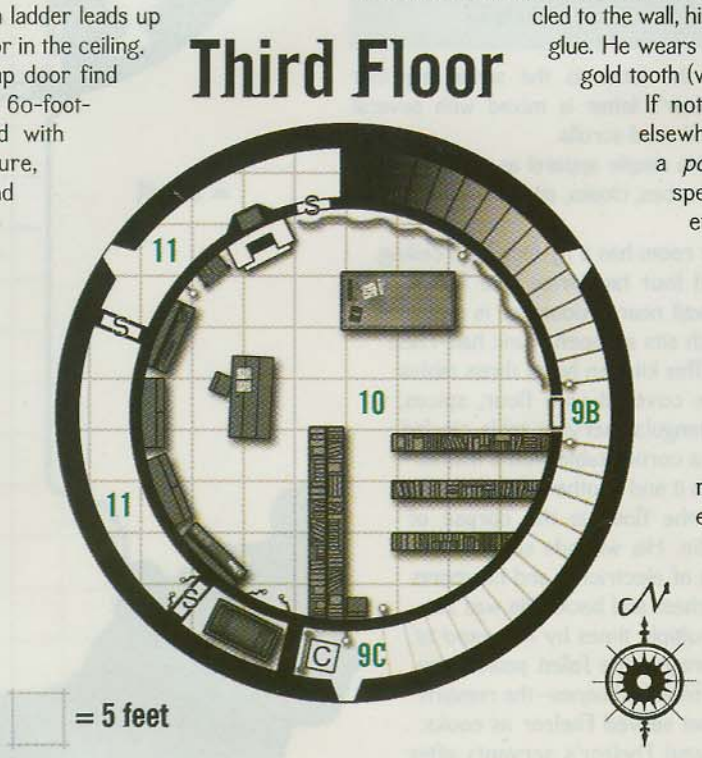
Rotary Saw Trap: CR 4; +10 melee (2d6/crit 19-20); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 24).

10. Fhelzor's Workroom/Library. This 40-foot-diameter, 15-foot-tall circular chamber has been divided into a workroom and library. To the north, near a fireplace, stands a mahogany table with a few cobwebs stretched between its legs. Alchemical apparatus, rags, and scraps of note paper cover the table. Behind it hang a pair of tapestries that together depict a fabulous undersea kingdom. Next to the hearth rests an opened trunk piled high with firewood. A desk stands before a pair of shelving units and two closed cabinets against the west wall. A comfortable chair stands behind the desk, while atop the desk rests a single, opened book. In the southeastern section of the room stand several, 8-foot-tall bookshelves. These shelves are packed with tomes, some of them covered in dust.

The tapestries and alchemical equipment are described under **Treasure #1.** The desk contains quills, ink jars, and pieces of parchment. The book atop the desk and the books in the library are detailed under **Treasure #2.** The shelves and cabinets along the west wall are detailed under **Treasure #3.** Both cabinets are *arcane locked* but not trapped.

A secret door set into the north wall can be detected with a successful Search skill check (DC 20). However, it can be opened only with a *knock* spell or by pulling down the torch nearest the hearth. It swings open to reveal area 11 beyond.

Out of sight from the eastern doorway, mounted to the south wall between the library bookshelves and the wizard's cabinets, is the skeleton of a pirate lord slain by Fhelzor. He has been manacled to the wall, his old bones held together with glue. He wears an eyepatch and has a single gold tooth (worth 1 gp).



If not encountered and defeated elsewhere, Fhelzor is here crafting a *potion of haste,* reading his spellbook, or feeding the dying embers of the fire.

Creature (EL 10): Fhelzor is a slim man. Most of the left side of his body has assumed a demonic form because of his fusion with a glabrezu demon. His skin varies from its natural soft pale complexion to a chitinous, deep russet. One of his eyes is bright blue, the other a turbulent violet. In his right hand he clasps a *wand of lightning bolts,* while his left hand ends in an oversized, crablike pincer. He prepares his spells using the Still Spell feat, allowing him to cast spells while keeping his *wand* in hand.

Fhelzor speaks Abyssal, Common, Elven, Draconic, Dwarven, and Undercommon.

Fhelzor Hornstaff, Half-Human/Half-Glabrezu Wiz8: CR 10; Medium-Size Outsider (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 8d8+32; hp 70; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (+2 Dex, +9 natural); Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, pincer claw); or +6 ranged (special); SA spell-like abilities; SQ *detect magic; true seeing;* poison immunity; electricity resistance 20; cold, acid, and fire resistance 10; telepathy; AL CE (formerly LN); SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +10 (saves have already been adjusted for the *+1 cloak of resistance* and Iron Will feat); Str 17, Dex 14, Con 19, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Alchemy +14, Concentration +15, Craft (sculpting) +10, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Listen +8, Scry +11, Spellcraft +15, Spot +8. *Feats:* Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

Spells (4/5/4/4/3)*: 0—none prepared at this level; 1st—*disrupt undead, ghost sound, mage hand, ray of frost;* 2nd—*cause fear, change self, magic missile, shield;* 3rd—*arcane lock, displacement*, invisibility, Melf's acid arrow;* 4th—*nondetection, slow, water breathing.* * All of the above spells except *displacement* are cast using the Still Spell feat and thus use a spell slot one level higher than normal.

SA—Spell-like Abilities (Sp): At will—*burning hands, chaos hammer, charm person, confusion, death knell, deeper darkness, desecrate, detect good, dispel magic, enlarge, mirror image, reverse gravity, shatter, unholy blight.* These abilities are as the spells cast by a 10th-level sorcerer (save DC 11 + spell level). Fhelzor can also *teleport without error* at will (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only) as the spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. Fhelzor's voice lacks the demonic resonance to cast *power word, stun* spells (this is a glabrezu spell-like ability).

SQ—Detect Magic (Su): Fhelzor continuously *detects magic* as the spell cast by a 12th-level sorcerer.

SQ—True Seeing (Su): Fhelzor benefits from continuous *true seeing* as the spell cast by a 12th-level cleric.

SQ—Telepathy (Su): Fhelzor can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Possessions: Wand of lightning bolts (cast at 5th-level; 25 charges; secret command word "Anzarak"), *+1 cloak of resistance,* scrolls (*improved invisibility, locate creature*) taken from area 10 (see **Treasure** #2 below) three *potions* (*cure moderate wounds, cure serious wounds, haste*).

Tactics: Once Fhelzor becomes aware of intruders, he casts *displacement* and *mirror image* on himself, drinks his *potion of haste,* reads a scroll of *improved invisibility,* casts *deeper darkness* on his workroom, and *teleports* to the PCs' location. He relies on his *true seeing* ability to spot invisible, ethereal, or otherwise hidden foes. If the PCs are too close to blast with his ready *wand,* he casts *chaos hammer, reverse gravity,* or *unholy blight* instead. If reduced to half hit points, he *teleports* back to area 10 and drinks his healing potions.

If the PCs try to flee, Fhelzor hounds them with telepathic threats and curses. Once he knows what the PCs look like, he casts *locate creature* from a scroll and uses the spell to track one of them. Given a chance, he casts *confusion* or *slow* on that individual to keep him from escaping. If the PCs successfully flee the island, Fhelzor does not pursue.

Treasure #1: The two tapestries depicting the undersea kingdom are worth 250 gp separately or 600 gp together. The alchemical apparatus on the table includes dozens of pieces of delicately blown glassware worth a total of 1,500 gp. Among the various inert elixirs and powders are two potions (*invisibility* and *water breathing*). The potions are labeled in Draconic.

Treasure #2: Fhelzor's spellbook rests atop his desk, open to a page protected by a *sepia snake sigil* spell (DC 16). The book, which has a blue leather cover bearing the words *The Book of Fhelzor,* contains the following spells:

0—all cantrips (see *Player's Handbook,* page 168);

1st—*alarm, cause fear, change self, detect magic, identify, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, read magic, shield, shocking grasp, summon monster I, true strike, unseen servant;*

2nd—*arcane lock, continual flame, fog cloud, invisibility, knock, Melf's acid arrow, obscure object, resist elements, see invisibility, summon monster II, summon swarm;*

3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, haste, hold person, lightning bolt, nondetection, sepia snake sigil, slow, summon monster III, water breathing, wind wall;*

4th—dimensional anchor, dimension door, ice storm, improved invisibility, locate creature, minor creation, summon monster IV.

The books in Fhelzor's library are mundane works on every topic of interest to a studious wizard, from alchemy to zoology. Most of the books are in poor condition and aren't worth much.

Stuffed inside a poorly written book titled *A Study of Gems* (written by Fendelbar Glittermonger, a gnome from Nyrond) are three arcane scrolls (*improved invisibility, locate creature, summon monster IV*) cast at 8th level.

Treasure #3: The shelves are lined with odd, semi-valuable trinkets: magnifying glasses, scales, skulls, Fhelzor's small metal bell collection, and so forth. PCs studying the items carefully can make a Spot skill check (DC 20) to notice that one of the smaller bells in Fhelzor's collection is actually made of mithral and has no clapper. The bell is, in fact a *chime of opening* that activates when struck. PCs can use the *chime* to bypass *arcane locked* doors.

The magically locked cabinets contain spell components and various odd substances that Fhelzor uses in his alchemy experiments. These raw ingredients are worth about 750 gp total, not including a small sack containing four 100-gp pearls that Fhelzor reserves for *identify* spells.

Development: If his two homonculi are here (see areas 3 and 5 for details), Fhelzor telepathically commands them to remain out of sight, calling them into battle only if they have a chance to use their poisonous bite attacks. They can also be used to fetch small magic items (potions and scrolls, or perhaps the *wand of hold person* in area 3) or lure PCs into traps.

11. Secret Gallery. Hidden behind the secret door in Fhelzor's workroom are a pair of curved galleries connected by a secret door that can be found with a successful Search skill check (DC 12). At the south end of the gallery, a human skeleton hangs from the wall by rusted manacles.

The hanging skeleton is meant to conceal a third secret door that requires a successful Search skill check (DC 20) to locate. Beyond the last secret door is a small chamber containing a pale stone sarcophagus with a sculpted lid and silver hinges. Fhelzor had no immediate use for the sarcophagus, which is empty.

Dungeon

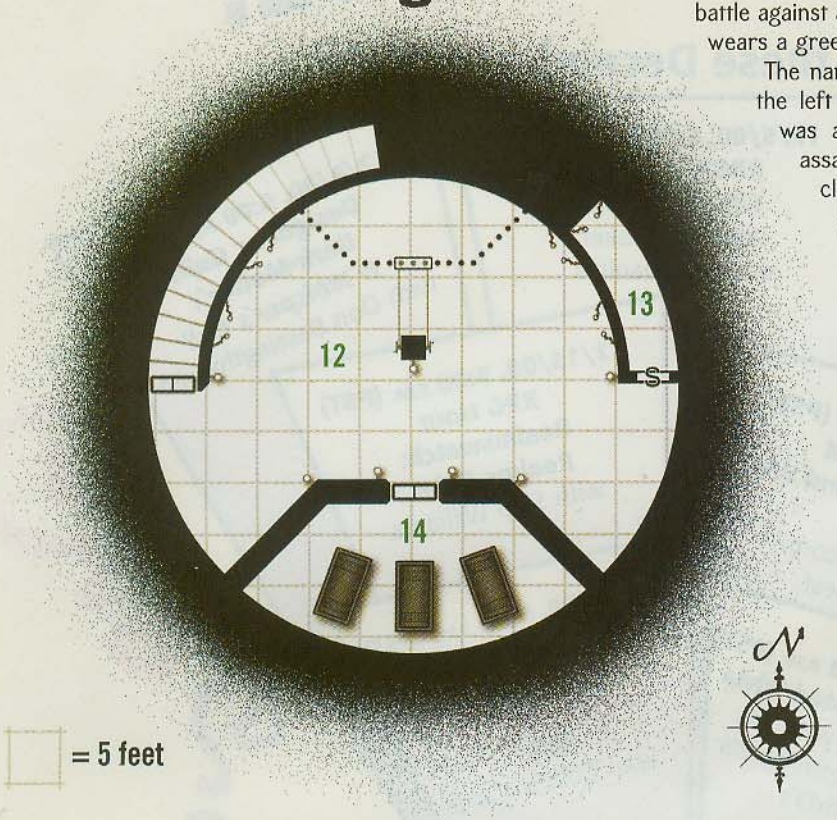
12. Prison. This 20-foot-high room is illuminated by six *everburning torches.* The "decor" consists of four skeletons—the remains of pirates—shackled to the northern wall. Between the manacled dead stands an iron-barred cell.

The cell door resembles an iron portcullis and is connected by thick ropes and pulleys to a rusty iron winch embedded in the floor. The winch squeals loudly when turned. Turning the winch requires a successful Strength check (DC 15), while lifting the portcullis without the aid of the winch is much harder (DC 30). Up to two PCs can turn the winch or lift the portcullis at once.

13. Varlad's Prison. The secret door leading to this cell is *arcane locked* and requires a successful Search skill check to locate (DC 15). Hanging from manacles at the end of the passage is the inanimate skeleton of an evil wizard who crossed Fhelzor.

Creature (EL —): Cowering in the middle of the floor is Varlad, Onzmeer's squire. Fhelzor checks on him once each day and provides him with barely enough food and water to survive.

Dungeon



Varlad, Male Human Ari1: CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid (4 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 1d8; hp 2 (6 at full); Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d3-2 subdual, unarmed attack); AL LG; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 7, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff +1, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Listen +3, Read Lips +3, Ride +7 (includes Skill Focus feat), Spot +3, Swim +2. *Feats:* Dodge, Skill Focus (Ride).

Varlad is a slim but good-looking 11-year-old boy with scruffy brown hair that hangs in front of his eyes.

14. Crypt. The doors leading to this room are trapped (as detailed under **Trap** #1 below). The room contains three pale stone sarcophagi. Each lid is trapped (as detailed under **Trap** #2 below) and has a name engraved into it (see below). The crypt is damp, cold, and unoccupied.

Lifting the lid of a sarcophagus requires a successful Strength check (DC 20). Lifting a lid reveals the inanimate skeletal remains of one of Fhelzor's wives. They are buried with the **Treasure**.

Trap #1 (EL 2): The doors to the crypt are rigged with a *fire trap* spell cast from a 9th-level arcane scroll.

Fire-Trapped **Doors:** CR 2; 1d4+9 points of damage, Reflex save (DC 14) for half; Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29).

Trap #2 (EL 2, 2, 2): Each sarcophagus lid is trapped with a *sepia snake sigil* spell.

Sepia Snake Sigil: CR 2; target immobilized for 1d4+1 days, Reflex saving throw (DC 17) negates; Search (DC special); Disable Device (n/a).

Treasure: The lid of the right sarcophagus is engraved with the name "Ayande." Ayande, Fhelzor's first wife, died in battle against a red dragon. Formerly a wizard, her skeleton wears a green robe and a *hand of the mage*.

The name "Larien" has been engraved on the lid of the left sarcophagus. Larien, Fhelzor's second wife, was a ruthless merchant who was killed by an assassin's blade. She is entombed in her finest clothes and has a money purse clasped in her skeletal hands. The purse holds 100 gp.

Engraved on the lid of the middle sarcophagus is the name "Dellyd." A captain in Nyrond's cavalry and Fhelzor's third wife, Dellyd was killed in the great war. She wears a gleaming masterwork breastplate bearing the emblem of Nyrond and has a masterwork longsword across her chest.

Concluding the Adventure

The PCs need not defeat Fhelzor to complete their mission; their goals are to recover the body of Onzmeer the Bold and rescue Varlad from the tower dungeon. The PCs would be wise to avoid the wizard (if possible) or deal with him at a later time, when they are more experienced. If the party returns with Onzmeer and Varlad, the clerics of Heironeous in Rel Mord are grateful and provide the agreed-upon reward. Onzmeer (and any PC who was slain and taken back to the temple) is raised from the dead. The day after Onzmeer is *raised*, his hippogriff mount returns from its aimless wandering. If the PCs were unable to rescue Varlad, Onzmeer insists on returning to the Demonclaw to find the boy, with or without the PCs.

With Fhelzor unable to help Nyrond combat the pirate threat, the king has little choice but to find help elsewhere—an excellent chance for the PCs to once again prove their loyalty to the kingdom and make Relmor Bay safe for sea travel. Ω

The money he earns for this adventure will help Peter pay for all the new D&D game products he intends to buy!

Encounter Level Chart

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (ELs) for all of the encounters in "Demonclaw."

Area	Encounter Description	EL
–	*Sepia Snake Sigil* Trap (1/window)	2 ea.
3	Glygul, Advanced Homonculus (1)	3
5	Myrlog, Advanced Homonculus (1)	3
8	Onzmeer, Male Half-orc Pal5	5
9A	*Alarm* Trap (1)	1
9B	*Alarm* Trap (1)	1
9C	Rotary Saw Trap (1)	4
10	Fhelzor, Male Half-Glabrezu Wiz8	10
14	*Fire-trapped* Doors (1)	2
	Sepia Snake Sigil Traps (3)	2 ea.

The Dying of the Light

By Sundown, It Will All Be Over

by Chris Doyle

artwork by Alan Pollack • cartography by Diesel

"The Dying of the Light" is a D&D adventure for four player characters (PCs) of 10th level, although it can be easily adapted for parties of different sizes and levels by increasing or decreasing the power of the Heptad and the number of creatures under its control (as noted in the "Adapting the Adventure" sidebar). The adventuring party should be well balanced and contain a cleric, wizard or sorcerer, and at least one fighter, paladin, or ranger. The main antagonists in this adventure are the seven members of the Heptad—all vampires. These are complex NPCs, so it is vital that you review each vampire carefully before running the adventure. The Heptad is fully detailed at the end of the adventure.

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Summary

The characters are drawn to the town of Briarwood by a sage named Franz Aldrich, who needs their help to free his fellow townsfolk from a sinister band of vampires. The PCs learn that the vampires have infested the local lord's castle. Equipped with some scrolls given to them by Aldrich, the PCs head to the castle at daybreak. They have until sundown to find and slay the members of the Heptad. Any vampires that survive the PCs' assault depart the castle at nightfall to exact revenge against Aldrich and the citizens of Briarwood.

Adventure Background

Two hundred years ago, a band of adventurers called the Dawn Crusaders assaulted the stronghold of the vampire-king Vasilis D'noor. The heroic band consisted of a powerful fighter, Valdemar, his lover Raven, a cleric of Pelor named Haroun, and the wizard Lachlan. The initial assault was a disaster, as Valdemar was slain in the vampire-king's throne room and the others were forced to flee. Unknown to the band, Valdemar became a vampire under Vasilis's control. Together they fled, eluding the Dawn Crusaders' dogged pursuit for decades.

Valdemar convinced his master to cast a *dream* spell on Raven to lure the Dawn Crusaders into an ambush. As the messenger of the *dream* spell, Valdemar invaded Raven's sleep and convinced her to join his spirit to finish the job the band started twenty years earlier. Valdemar led Raven to Vasilis's lair, but he had his own plans. Raven, since married to Lachlan, assembled the Dawn Crusaders and attempted to destroy the vampire-king. The band succeeded, but Lachlan was separated from the group and transformed into a vampire by Valdemar. Valdemar then appeared before the others and congratulated them. With a carefully placed *charm* on Raven, it became an easy task to ambush Haroun and turn them both into vampires. The Dawn Crusaders were reunited and began a nocturnal reign of terror.

After decades of wandering, Valdemar decided it was time to find a lair. They settled on a remote castle situated in a caldera. The quartet fell upon the inhabitants and fed well that night. They *charmed* the lord of the castle and subjugated the nearby town of Briarwood. Over the years, three more vampires joined the group, forming the Heptad.

The first was Bathica, an alchemist from Hookhill smitten with Valdemar decades before. Valdemar had a brief fling with her, turned her into a vampire, and then left. Years later, she led the vampires to the castle and convinced them it would make an ideal lair.

Next came Lythia, a drow vampire rogue from the Underdark. When she learned of the vampires living in Caer Morrow, she attempted to infiltrate its defenses. Raven cornered her in the courtyard and immediately took a liking to the drow, convincing Valdemar to let her join the group.

Valk, a dwarven vampire, was the last to arrive. When a vampire hunter destroyed his master, he found himself alone and without a purpose. For years he wandered about before he encountered Lythia, who brought him to Caer Morrow. Raven was put off by Valk's abrasiveness, but Valdemar found humor in it and placed the dwarf in charge of the castle's defenses. Eventually, Valdemar tired of the castle's lord and offered the hapless thrall to Valk's pet gorgon. To this date, the Heptad remain the uncontested rulers of Caer Morrow.

Adapting the Adventure

This adventure is designed for a party of four 9th-level characters. However, the adventure can be modified for parties of different levels simply by modifying the number and strength of the adversaries.

5th- to 6th-level PCs: Subtract two class levels from each Heptad vampire, reduce their number from seven to five (and call them the Pentad), or have a few of the Heptad members absent when the PCs attack. Have Aldrich give the PCs additional healing scrolls and potions. Be wary of encounters with an Encounter Level (EL) higher than 3 + the party's average level. An EL 9 encounter is probably too tough for a 5th-level party and should be reworked or removed.

7th- to 9th-level PCs: Run the module as written, but keep in mind that the PCs will likely need to heal and/or rest between encounters. Given the module's unforgiving timeline, you might consider placing some additional healing scrolls and potions throughout the castle or make the Heptad more dysfunctional as an organization, so that they are unlikely to mount a strong defense. (Conversely, one or two of them might be absent when the PCs attack.) If the PCs are still having trouble, consider subtracting one class level from each of the vampires or reducing the number of minions.

11th- to 12th-level PCs: Run the module as written. If the PCs are having too easy a time, have the Heptad vampires confront the PCs in teams of three or more and increase the number of vampire spawn at their command.

13th- to 14th-level PCs: If you're running the adventure with a particularly seasoned group of players, consider adding one or two class levels to each Heptad member or giving the vampires more powerful minions. (For instance, the dark naga Shandrylla (area 48) might have additional sorcerer levels. Reduce or remove the magic items given to the PCs by Franz Aldrich. Encounters with an EL lower than the average party level - 3 should be "beefed up." A standard *glyph of warding*, for instance, can be replaced with a *greater glyph of warding*.

15th- to 16th-level PCs: In addition to the changes noted above, *unhallow* spells should be placed throughout the castle, and each member of the Heptad should have 1d3 additional magic items.

"The Dying of the Light" adapts easily to the FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign setting. Suitable locations for the Cauldron include the Orsraun Mountains (in Turmish), the Galena Mountains (in Damara), or the foothills of the Greypeak Mountains. Briarwood can be situated near any of these mountain ranges with few changes. Haroun is a cleric of Cyric or Myrkul, and Lachlan worships Shar.

For the Dungeon Master

The town of Briarwood is nestled at the foot of the northern Lortmil Mountains. The town contains several hundred citizens who farm the fertile valleys and hunt game on the slopes. As far as the outside world is concerned, the town is governed by a lord who resides in a nearby castle. About ten years ago, the Heptad assaulted the castle and slew or enslaved its inhabitants. Briarwood did not notice the change for several years, as the enthralled lord continued his rule. Over the years, the vampires *charmed* key members of the town and have since disposed of the lord and now openly inhabit the castle.

A local sage named Franz Aldrich has decided the reign of terror should end. Over the past few months, Aldrich has quietly accumulated magic items and copied numerous scrolls to combat the vampires. He poses as a befuddled old man to avoid appearing as a threat. All he needs is a band of brave adventurers to assault the castle.

Aldrich's plans have not gone unnoticed. One month ago, Aldrich purchased two potions of *negative energy protection* from a wizard in the city of Hookhill. A *charmed* townsperson discovered the transaction and notified the vampires. They responded by ransacking the sage's house and stealing the potions and a *wand of restoration*. However, Aldrich managed to hide himself in the pocket dimension of his *wand of rope trick* along with the scrolls before the vampires arrived.

Furious at this turn of events, Aldrich affixed a message to his winged cat companion and sent it to locate heroes.

For the Players

Unless the PCs already know Franz Aldrich, use the following encounter to begin.

> Dark clouds encroach on the horizon. Suddenly, a dark shape hurtles down from the sky in an awkward twisting motion before disappearing into the nearby underbrush.

The dark shape is a winged domestic cat named Flit. The cat has gray fur and a small white patch on her neck. Currently, an arrow protrudes from Flit's rear haunch, compliments of a wandering gnoll pack. The winged cat has 0 hp and thrashes about in obvious pain. Unless the PCs use a *cure* spell or make a successful Heal skill check (DC 15) to remove the arrow, she drops to -1 hp and loses 1 hp each round thereafter until she dies or stabilizes.

Attached to Flit's nametag collar is a tiny leather scroll case containing a letter. Flit was supposed to bring the message to the city of Hookhill, but this chance encounter with the PCs serves just as well. The letter reads:

> *To whoever receives this letter,*
>
> *Briarwood has fallen under a curse, and we need assistance immediately. I'm seeking a band of able adventurers to put an end to the evil plaguing our fair town. Please seek me in Briarwood using the map below. My residence is the third cottage on the left, on Willow Way. I promise great rewards for any service rendered.*
>
> *Your humble servant,*
> *Franz Aldrich, Sage of Briarwood*
>
> *P.S. Please seek me immediately upon your arrival and do not speak to other townsfolk. Many of our own people have been afflicted by the curse and could harm strangers.*

The map shows the location of Briarwood in relation to various other towns and key landmarks. It should take the PCs two days to reach Briarwood on foot, or half a day by horse.

Creature (EL –): If healed, Flit follows the PCs back to Briarwood. If the PCs decide not to pursue the adventure but keep the letter, Flit returns to Aldrich to get a new letter. Otherwise, it flies to Hookhill to find some worthy heroes.

Flit, Winged Cat (1): CR 1/4; Tiny Animal (1 ft. long); HD 1/2d8; hp 2; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex); Atk +4 melee (1d2-4 [×2], claws), -1 melee (1d3-4, bite); Face 2 1/2 ft. × 2 1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 3, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +5, Hide +17*, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Spot +4. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (claw, bite).

Arriving at Briarwood

Briarwood is a farming town surrounded by a stockade fence. The local militia patrols the walls, but the guards are instructed to let most travelers inside after a few standard questions. The residents are noticeably withdrawn, sullen, and dispirited. Townsfolk avoid eye contact and reply to questions with curt responses, as conspiring with strangers is punishable by imprisonment in Caer Morrow's dungeons. If questioned about the vampires, the townsfolk look panic-stricken and hurry away. About ten percent of the population are *charmed* and report unusual strangers via a message attached to a raven under Lady Raven's control.

It's easy to locate Aldrich's cottage, a ramshackle affair with sagging shutters and peeling paint. The door hangs limply on its hinges, obviously forced recently. The interior has been ransacked, and broken furniture and papers are strewn about.

Since the attack, Aldrich spends most of his time in pocket spaces created by his *wand of rope trick*. Periodically he checks on the cottage and appears before the PCs several minutes after they arrive.

When Aldrich first encounters the PCs, he plays the part of a befuddled sage while carefully prodding the PCs for information, but it's up to them to convince him of their good intentions and prove they are not allied with the vampires. As the Dungeon Master, you can resolve this through good roleplaying or a successful Diplomacy skill check (DC 15). If Flit is with the PCs (and fully healed), the PCs receive a +10 bonus to the check. If the PCs win his trust, Aldrich drops the façade and reveals himself as a cunning, stern, authoritative figure.

Aldrich explains to the PCs the situation that has befallen Briarwood. (Summarize the "For the Dungeon Master" section.) Aldrich describes how he remained hidden and relates last week's attack, including the subsequent loss of the *potions of negative energy protection* and the *wand of restoration*.

Aldrich begs the PCs to assault the castle and slay as many vampires as they can. If they agree, Aldrich gives them five scrolls, which he scribed himself or purchased from a 6th-level cleric of Pelor in Hookhill:

- #1 (divine): *magic circle against evil* (×3)
- #2 (divine): *daylight, lesser restoration* (×2)
- #3 (divine): *consecrate, invisibility to undead* (×2)
- #4 (arcane): *detect undead* (×3)
- #5 (arcane): *daylight* (×2), *detect secret doors*

Aldrich also loans his *+4 spectacles of gaze resistance* to the PCs and explains their power (see below). Finally, he is willing to part with his remaining savings (300 gp) if the PCs need to purchase any equipment. Obviously, wooden stakes, holy symbols, holy water, and garlic are not available in Briarwood.

Spectacles of Gaze Resistance: These spectacles grant the wearer a +1 to +5 resistance bonus to all saves against gaze attacks, including *eyebite* spells, the *confusion* gaze of an umber hulk, the *domination* gaze of a vampire, or the petrifying gaze of a medusa or basilisk.

Caster Level: 12th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, caster level must be three times the spectacles' bonus; *Market Price:* 750 gp (+1), 3,000 gp (+2), 6,750 gp (+3), 12,000 gp (+4), or 18,750 gp (+5); *Weight:* —.

Creature (EL —): Franz Aldrich is in his mid-sixties with white hair and a short beard. He's gaunt and wears disheveled robes. Gold-rimmed spectacles perch precariously on his nose.

Franz Aldrich, Male Human Exp4/Wiz4: CR 7; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 4d6 (Exp) plus 4d4 (Wiz); hp 25; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 9 (-1 Dex); Atk +5 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); or +4 ranged (no weapon); SA spells; AL NG; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +12 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 10, Dex 9, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Alchemy +9, Concentration +8, Decipher Script +6, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (religion) +6, Profession (scribe) +11, Ride +2, Search +5, Spellcraft +11, Spot +5. *Feats:* Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll.

Possessions: +4 spectacles of gaze resistance, wand of rope trick (30 charges; command word "Hiddenhaven"), dagger.

Leaving Briarwood

Aldrich provides the location of Caer Morrow. He suggests they assault at dawn, when the vampires are inactive, and destroy as many as they can before nightfall. Aldrich can also provide sketchy details about the castle's exterior layout.

Creatures (EL 8, 9 if the militia intercedes): When the PCs attempt to leave town, they are confronted by an angry mob of townsfolk gathered by three *charmed* individuals instructed to watch Aldrich's cottage. They have orders to determine what the strangers are up to and are armed with pitchforks and clubs. They confront the PCs as they approach the gate. The militia watches idly, intervening only if battle ensues.

The PCs need to be delicate with this situation, as most of these are innocent folk, incensed by lies from a few *charmed* individuals. The PCs should not simply attack or *fireball* the mob. If they have a plausible story, they can convince the mob to disband. If the players aren't strong roleplayers, use Bluff or Diplomacy skill checks to determine the PCs' success. Use the "Influencing NPC Attitude" table (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 149), and treat the townsfolk as "unfriendly."

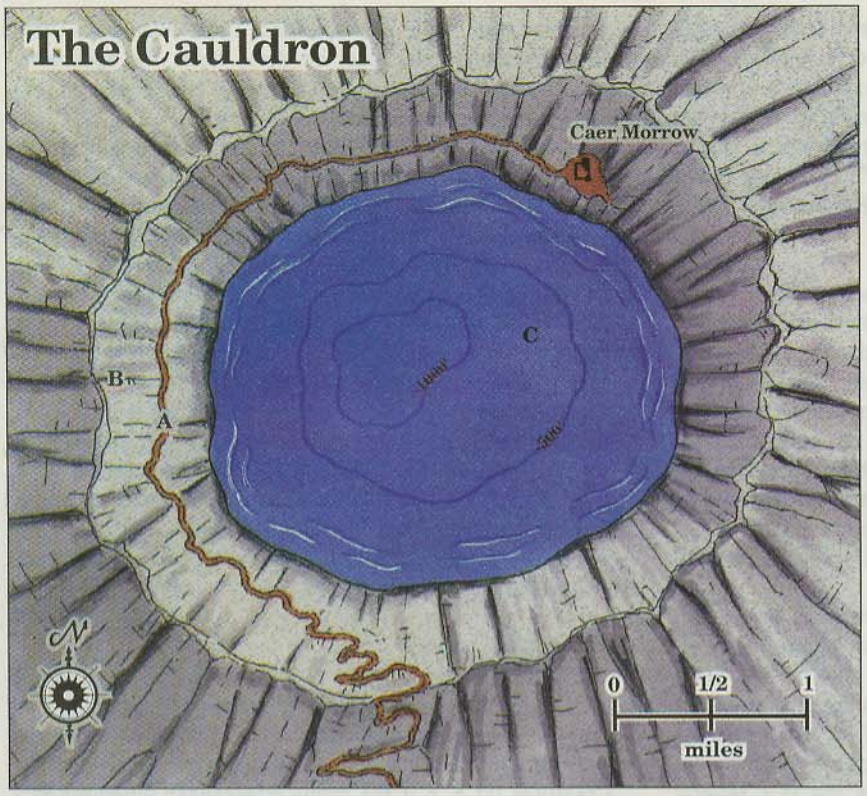
Sleep, hypnotic pattern, color spray, or similar spells can be used to disable the townsfolk, or the PCs could fly or *teleport* to safety. Casting spells on the mob won't endear the PCs to the local militia, which intercedes in 2 rounds.

Townsfolk, Male and Female Human Com1 (32): CR 1/4; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 to 6 ft. tall); HD 1d4; hp 2 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; Atk +0 melee (1d6, pitchfork or club); AL NG; SV Fort +2 (includes Great Fortitude), Ref +0, Will -1; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 9.

Skills: Craft (any) +5, Ride +2. *Feats:* Great Fortitude, Skill Focus—Craft (any).

Soldiers, Male and Female Human War1 (10): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 to 6 ft. tall); HD 1d10; hp 8 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+5 chainmail, +2 large wooden shield); Atk +1 melee (1d6/crit ×3, halfspear); or +1 ranged (1d6/crit ×3, shortbow); AL NG; SV Fort +4 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +0, Will -1; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 9.

Skills: Intimidate (any) +2, Jump +2, Listen +1 (includes Alertness feat), Ride +3, Spot +1 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Great Fortitude.



The Cauldron

Looming over the town of Briarwood is an ancient, inactive volcano. Caer Morrow—the castle of the local lord—is situated on the inner slope of the volcano's caldera. Water has filled the basin, creating a lake over 1,000 feet deep. The locals refer to the lake as the Cauldron, due to its dark and warm waters.

A small path leads up the caldera slope, about 1,400 feet high. The path meanders down the inside of the caldera to a point about 100 feet above the water's surface. The path then makes its way around the western edge to the opposite side and to the castle.

The PCs have several methods to approach the castle. If they follow the path, they are ambushed at area A by six winged owlbears. The owlbears lair in a cave 600 feet above the path (area B). If the PCs use magical flight to cross the Cauldron, they encounter the flying owlbears halfway across the lake. In this case, the owlbears cannot achieve surprise.

The PCs might be wary of the path and decide it's safer to cross the lake. They could construct a crude raft to suit their needs or procure a old boat from a retired shipwright in Briarwood. If they cross the lake on a raft or boat, the PCs are not attacked by the winged owlbears, as they fear the undead lake monster (see area C).

A. Owlbear Ambush. When the PCs reach this portion of the path, they are ambushed by six winged owlbears. The owlbears swoop from the rear, using their stealth and the howling winds to hide their descent; PCs who fail a Spot check (DC 18) are surprised.

Creatures (EL 9): The winged owlbears charge the PCs on the first round, gaining a +2 attack bonus for charging and a +1 attack bonus for higher ground against PCs who are not flying. (Because they are charging, the owlbears also suffer a -2 AC penalty for the round.) An owlbear that is reduced to 10 or fewer hit points flies back to the cave (area B), scrambling up the rocky terrain at normal speed if flight is not possible.

Adult Winged Owlbears (6): CR 4; Large Beast (12 ft. tall); HD 5d10+20; hp 47 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor); AC 15 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +7 melee (1d6+5 [×2], claws), +2 melee (1d8+2, bite); Face 5 ft. × 10 ft.; SA improved grab; SQ scent; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 5, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Listen +8, Spot +7.

B. Winged Owlbear Cave. Situated 600 feet above the path, this cave is inhabited by a family of winged owlbears. In addition to six adults, there are three young. The juvenile owlbears are almost fully grown and have feathered wings, but are incapable of flight.

The cave is littered with bones, feathers, several mountain goat carcasses, and the **Treasure.**

Creatures (EL 7): If the PCs enter the foul smelling cave, the young fight like cornered animals. Any wounded adults that fled the ambush (see area A) are here and get a +2 bonus to hit while savagely protecting their young.

Juvenile Winged Owlbears (3): hp 35 each; see above for full statistics.

Treasure: Scattered amid the bones, feathers, and filth in this cave are 340 sp, 210 gp, and five gems (50 gp each).

C. Nyssa's Lair. A large vent 220 feet below the surface of the lake serves as the lair of an undead lake dinosaur the vampires have named Nyssa.

Creature (EL 10): Nyssa resided in the Cauldron long before the vampires settled Caer Morrow. The Heptad experimented on the beast and lured it out of the water so they could energy drain her. Instead of becoming a loyal undead guardian, however, Nyssa retained a semblance of free will. It attacks anything that dares to disturb its lake.

Nyssa, Gargantuan Elasmosaurus Zombie (1): CR 10; Gargantuan Undead (Aquatic) (60 ft. long); HD 24d12+3; hp 165; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., swim 80 ft.; AC 12 (-4 size, +6 natural); Atk +16 melee (2d8+11/crit 19-20, bite); SA *stinking cloud,* improved grab; Face 20 ft. by 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.; SQ undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +14; Str 26, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Improved Critical (bite), Toughness.

SA—Stinking Cloud (Su): Once per hour, Nyssa can breathe forth a cloud of nauseating gas with effects identical to the *stinking cloud* spell (as cast by a 12th-level sorcerer). This is a standard action; Nyssa cannot breathe the gas and bite in the same round.

SA—Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, Nyssa must hit with her bite attack. Once a victim is locked in her jaws, she dives and holds the prey underwater until it drowns.

Tactics: Nyssa uses her first partial action to raise her head and 20-foot-long neck out of the water, leaving the rest of her

body submerged. The following round, she breathes a *stinking cloud*. She follows up with bite attacks until she succeeds in grabbing a victim. She then dives underwater and holds her victim there until it drowns before again rising to the surface.

Caer Morrow

This impressive castle was built by the wealthy Morrow family more than two centuries ago. Little is known about the Morrows except that they were mostly benevolent and kept to themselves. Rumors that the Morrows were howling mad—no doubt spread by jealous rivals from Hookhill—were simply untrue. The most recent lord, Blair Morrow, was particularly well regarded; every year after the harvest he would invite the villagers of Briarwood to Caer Morrow for an all-night feast and celebration—an event that held him in good stead.

Lord Morrow and his household have not been seen or heard from in months, leading many to fear that the Morrows have fallen prey to the castle's invaders.

The Heptad does not sit by and let the PCs storm their castle. They have formulated a plan of defense should the alarm be raised.

The dwarven vampire spawn (area 16) are split into three packs of three. At night, they begin a sweep of the castle. Their instructions are to locate intruders and assess their strength. They employ hit-and-run tactics (to take advantage of their fast healing) and attempt to funnel PCs into an ambush. The suits of animated armor in areas 15, 17, and 41 are held in reserve and stand ready to pursue targets into sunlit locations that the vampires can't reach.

Raven and Lythia use their *gaseous form* and *spider climb* abilities to shadow the PCs. Their goal is lead the PCs into an ambush. At night, the ambush takes place in the courtyard (area 5). During the day, the ambush takes place in the great hall (area 11). They, too, employ hit-and-run tactics.

Valdemar, Haroun, and Valk then ambush intruders in the courtyard or great hall. If the gorgon has not been slain, Valk beckons it to join him.

Lachlan casts his defensive spells and uses *arcane eye* to keep tabs on the PCs, confronting them in a secluded spot to pitch his offer (see area 50 for details).

Bathica retrieves the potions from area 40 and distributes them to the Heptad. She then remains out of harm's way. If seriously opposed, she joins Lachlan in the dungeon.

All *charmed* servants and vampire spawn are commanded to return to their chambers until the intruders are dealt with. If the vampires suffers serious losses, they use their vampire spawn to hold off the PCs until they can regroup.

Resting Vampires

During the day, PCs might catch one or more vampires resting in their coffins. If the PCs make no effort to silence their approach, assume that they "take 0" on their Move Silently skill check, and allow the vampire to make an opposed Listen check. Thus, a PC who has a +5 bonus to Move Silently checks and makes no effort to approach quietly would get a 5 (0 + 5).

If a resting vampire fails to detect the PCs outside its coffin, each PC is entitled to one free partial action. Opening an unlocked coffin is a partial action, so a PC cannot open a coffin and attack the vampire within during the surprise round. However, one PC can open the coffin while another uses her surprise partial action to strike the resting vampire.

The Castle at Night

The adventure assumes PCs assault Caer Morrow during the day, when the vampires are holed up in the dark recesses of the castle. If they attack at night, the following creature locations should be adjusted:

- The vampire spawn maids Inga, Elvir, and Anastassya are busy cleaning areas 11, 12, and 14 respectively.
- Hawthorne, the vampire spawn butler, stays with Valdemar in area 23a.
- The *charmed* townsfolk Irin, Nona, and Mindara are in area 10, preparing food for the other servants.
- The dwarven vampire spawn patrol areas 5, 42, and 44.
- The groundskeepers Cole, Tarron, and Jasper retire to their room (area 26).

Location of the Heptad

Vampire	Day: Sunrise to Sunset	Night: Sunset to Sunrise	Other Possible Locations
Lythia	4	special*	3, 5
Haroun	19	14	–
Raven	23b	2	23a
Valdemar	23b	23a	12, 22, 29
Valk	31	31	29, 44
Bathica	40	36	35, 37, 41
Lachlan	50	50	35

* During the night, Lythia rides her nightmare around the Cauldron.

Level One (Areas 1-16)

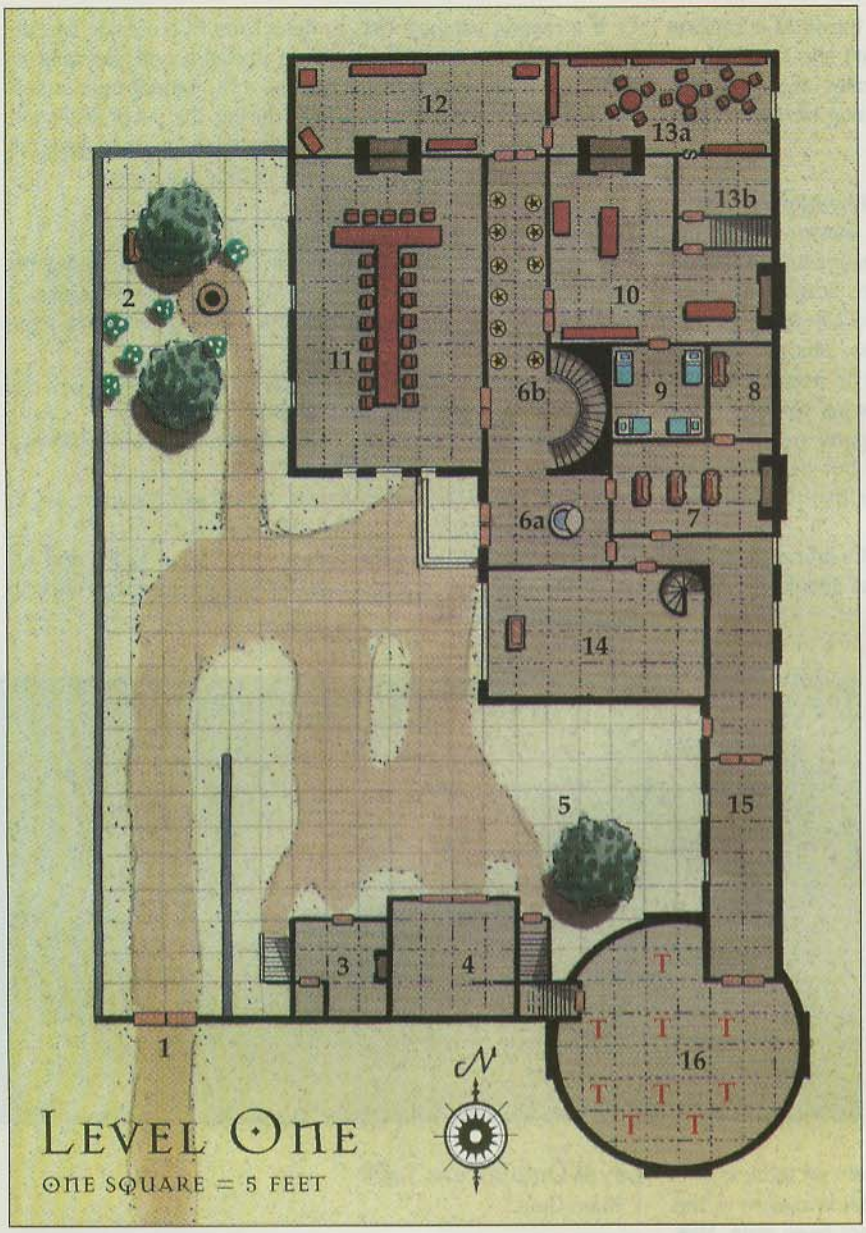
1. Main Gate.

The mist parts to reveal an imposing castle overlooking the caldera lake. A 20-foot-high wall lined with wooden shutters surmounts the castle gate, which consists of a pair of large oaken doors. Flanking the doors are two sculptures carved out of the wall. They depict fierce creatures with leonine bodies, hawkish heads and talons, and feathered wings.

The sculptures flanking the doors depict griffons. The doors are opened and closed using a winch mechanism in area 17. If PCs try to force the doors, the animated suits of armor in area 17 spring the **Trap**.

Heavy Oak Doors: 5 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 50 (each door); Break (DC 30); Open Lock (n/a).

Trap (EL 2): The animated suits of armor in area 17 pour acid out the windows overlooking the doors when intruders try to breach the gate. They can splash acid on PCs within 10 feet of the south wall without suffering range increment penalties. Treat the acid as a ranged touch attack; a direct hit deals 2d6 points of damage and 1 point of splash damage.



2. Gardens and False Well.

A gravel footpath leads into a garden of white rose bushes. A pair of drooping cypress trees dangle over the path. The remainder of the undergrowth consists of twisted shrubs and coarse grass. The path ends at the crumbling remains of a stone well.

Raven tends this garden at night. Six of the rosebushes she has planted here are detailed under **Creatures** below.

The well descends 30 feet to a mass of dry dirt and leaves. Under this mess is an unlocked wooden trapdoor that masks an entrance to the dungeon level (area 49). Hidden off the path, requiring a successful Search check (DC 15) to locate, is one of Raven's coffins. It contains nothing but dirt.

Creatures (EL 5, +5 if Raven is present): Six vampire rose bushes grow in the garden and lash out at intruders. The bushes do not attack vampires or their spawn.

Raven: hp 64; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Vampire Rose Bushes (6): CR 1; Small Plant (4 ft. diameter); HD 1d8; hp 7 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 0 ft.; AC 12 (+1 size, +1 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d2 [×4], thorny tendrils); Reach 10 ft.; SA blood drain; SQ plant, blindsight, regeneration 2; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 3.

SA–Blood Drain (Ex): If a vampire rose bush hits with one of its tendrils, it attaches to the victim and automatically drains 1 point of temporary Constitution each round. All four tendrils can attack the same target. Each tendril has 3 hp (these are separate from the main bush's hit points), and breaking a tendril requires a successful Strength check (DC 11). As the bush drains blood, its white roses turn crimson.

SQ–Plant: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

SQ–Regeneration (Ex): A vampire rose bush regenerates 2 hp/round. Severed tendrils grow back in a day.

SQ–Blindsight (Ex): See the *Monster Manual*, page 9, for details.

3. Smithy.

This building was once a blacksmith's forge. An anvil stands before a soot-stained hearth, and a barrel of horseshoes rests in one corner. The interior is relatively clean except for a pile of iron filings pushed against the far wall near a wooden toolshed.

The toolshed is locked. The shed contains pitchforks, shovels, and an upright coffin that belongs to Willi, a 10-year-old boy with unkempt red hair and freckles. Willi has cornflower blue eyes, dirty clothes, and a straw hat. He clutches Mr. Snuffles, a ragged teddy bear with a missing eye and torn ear. Lythia kidnapped Willi from Briarwood and turned him into a vampire spawn.

Hidden under the anvil is the key to the toolshed door. Willi assumes *gaseous form* to enter and exit his coffin.

Locked Wooden Door [Toolshed]: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; Break (DC 13); Open Lock (DC 25).

Creatures (EL 4 for Willi, EL 7 for nightmares): During the day, Willi is resting in his coffin. At night, he is cleaning the forge and fixing the bed of iron filings. During the day, Lythia's two nightmares lay atop iron filings. At night, Lythia and one of the nightmares are flying around the caldera.

Nightmares (2): hp 52 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

Willi, Vampire Spawn (1): hp 20; *Monster Manual* 182.

Tactics: If the PCs enter the stables during the day, the nightmares rise from their bed and try to frighten them away. They attack only in self-defense or if commanded by Lythia.

Willi acts like a prisoner and attempts to charm a female PC, gaining her sympathy. When the PCs let their guard down, he attacks, using his *spider climb* or *gaseous form* ability to flee if reduced to half hit points. If he escapes, Willi alerts the Heptad to the party's intrusion.

4. Stable and Carriage House.

The left corner of this carriage house contains a huge pile of hay. A covered wagon rests near the pile, and a massive black carriage with darkened windows stands in the center of the chamber.

The covered wagon is used by the merchants in area **26** to purchase and transport supplies. Inside is a small metal box used to transport bottles of blood obtained from the *charmed* butcher in town.

The nightmares in area **3** are used to draw the black carriage, which has black-tinted windows. The interior is lined with velvet benches. A secret compartment in the floor requires a successful Search check (DC 25) to locate. The compartment holds one of Lythia's coffins, but instead of dirt it's lined with straw. The carriage is a mobile grave, allowing her to travel by day with a spare coffin nearby.

Hidden under the pile of hay is another of Lythia's coffins as well as a locked chest that contains the **Treasure** and is protected by the **Trap**.

Hanging on the south wall is a custom leather saddle Valk uses for his gorgon steed.

Creature (EL 9): During the day, Lythia is resting in the coffin under the hay. She attacks for a few rounds before fleeing in *gaseous form*. At night, she is patrolling the caldera astride a nightmare mount and is not present.

Lythia: hp 50; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Trap (EL 3): The chest is locked and requires a successful Open Locks skill check (DC 25) to open. The lock is trapped with a needle poisoned with black lotus extract.

Poison Needle: CR 3; initial 1d6 temporary Constitution, secondary 2d6 temporary Constitution; Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) negates; Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 22).

Treasure: Under the seat in the black carriage is a small leather sack of platinum filings (worth 2,000 gp) used to feed the nightmares. The trapped chest contains Lythia's personal wealth: an electrum tiara set with sapphires (3,000 gp), a gold amulet set with five emeralds (2,700 gp), and 120 gp.

5. Courtyard.

A large elm tree grows in the southeast corner of the courtyard. Several dozen black birds perch on the tree's limbs.

The courtyard is inhabited (day and night) by Valk's steed: a gorgon. A pile of iron shavings situated between the southeast tree and the tower wall serves as the gorgon's nest. The solitary elm tree is inhabited by a flock of ravens loyal to Raven. They do not attack unless provoked or commanded by their dark mistress.

During the day, three *charmed* townsfolk (named Cole, Tarron, and Jasper) tend the grounds. Cole is a rugged bear of a halfling, Tarron is a dim-witted lug, and Jasper is an older, wiry man. They carry shovels and hoes that can be used as weapons (damage 1d4/crit ×2). Cole and Tarron attack intruders while Jasper attempts to flee and raise an alarm. Valk has instructed his gorgon not to attack these groundskeepers without provocation.

A strong wooden door provides access to the dungeon (area **47**), but it has an *arcane lock* and the **Trap** placed upon it.

Strong Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; Break (DC 18, 28 with *arcane lock* spell).

Trap (EL 3): The door to the dungeon is trapped with a cold *glyph of warding* placed by Haroun.

Glyph of Warding: CR 3; 4d8 points of cold damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 19) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Creatures (EL 8): The gorgon rests lazily atop its nest until it detects intruders, at which point it charges. On the next round, it breathes its cloud of petrifying gas.

Gorgon (1): hp 68; *Monster Manual* 111.

Ravens (17): hp 1 each; *Monster Manual* 201.

***Charmed* Groundskeepers, Male Halfling and Human Com1** (3): hp 4, 4, 3; see Chapter 2 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for complete statistics for commoner NPCs.

Development: If the PCs are having an easy time with the gorgon, the large gargoyles located on the rooftop (area **43**) swoop down to attack. Treat this initial attack as a charge. The gargoyles return to their rooftop perches if the gorgon is slain or they lose two or more of their number. The appearance of the gargoyles causes the ravens and groundskeepers (if present) to scatter. The gorgon and gargoyles do not attack one another, as per Valk's orders.

6. Entry Hall.

The grand hall has a plain flagstone floor with a marble fountain depicting a warrior entwined by a thick serpent. Water spewing from the serpent's mouth washes over the warrior's shield before tumbling into the basin below.

To the left, a sweeping staircase with a gold-etched oak handrail climbs to the second floor. North of the stairwell is a long hall with statues lining each side.

The entry hall is divided into two areas, the fountain (area **6a**) and hall of statues (area **6b**). There are ten statues total, each composed of dull gray stone with sharp details. The statues are, in fact, members of the Morrow household petrified by Valk's gorgon in area 5. If *stone to flesh* spells are used to restore them to life, refer to the **Creatures** section below.

Creatures (EL –): The petrified household members include Lady Sarah Morrow (wife of Lord Blair Morrow), Blair Jr. and Timothy Morrow (her two eldest sons), Burci Wainwright (the blacksmith), Martha Templeton (Timothy's music teacher), Thell Darksword (the captain of the guard), and four castle guards. Fear and distress are clearly etched into their stony visages.

Sarah Morrow, Female Human Ari5: hp 22; see Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for full statistics.

Blair, Jr. and Timothy Morrow, Male Human Ari3: hp 17, 12; see Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for statistics.

Burci Wainwright, Male Human Exp4 (blacksmith): hp 16; see Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for full statistics.

Martha Templeton, Female Human Exp2: hp 10; see Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for full statistics.

Thell Darksword, Male Human War5: hp 38; see Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for full statistics. Thell wears banded mail and carries a masterwork longsword.

Castle Guards, Male Human War2 (4): hp 14 each; see Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for full statistics.

Variant Rule: Staking a Vampire

A wooden stake deals 1d6-2/crit ×2 damage. The stake need not be magical in nature to impale a vampire, but the vampire takes damage only if the stake is *blessed* (with a *bless weapon* spell) or enchanted (as a +1 or better weapon).

Staking a vampire through the heart requires a successful attack roll, with a -4 penalty if the attacker does not possess the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (wooden stake) feat. If the attack succeeds, the attacker and vampire must make an opposed Strength check. If the attacker wins the opposed check, the vampire is impaled through the heart and paralyzed. A paralyzed vampire has an effective Strength and Dexterity of 0 and cannot move or act physically, nor can it assume *gaseous form.* It can continue to *dominate* foes with its gaze attack and take purely mental actions, however. Removing the stake (which requires a move-equivalent action) instantly frees the vampire from its paralysis, enabling it to act normally on its next turn.

Staking a helpless vampire requires neither an attack roll nor an opposed Strength check. Staking a pinned vampire through the heart requires an attack roll (with a +4 bonus because it's pinned) but no opposed Strength check.

Vampires, being undead, are not subject to critical hits or coup de grace attacks.

7. Maids' Quarters.

Set into the far wall of this dark chamber is a large stone fireplace. Three wooden coffins are arrayed in the middle of the floor.

This room is occupied by three vampire spawn that serve the Heptad as maids. Each has a simple wooden coffin and several extra changes of clothes. The fireplace serves as an impromptu escape route for vampire spawn in *gaseous form.*

Creatures (EL 7): The first maid, Inga, is a voluptuous woman with a husky voice and dominant personality. The second maid, Elvir, is soft-spoken with raven-black hair pulled into a tight ponytail. The third maid, Anastassya, is a tiny girl with short blonde hair and sassy demeanor. During the day, they are in their coffins; at night, they are dusting their coffins or milling about the castle.

Inga, Elvir, and Anastassya, Vampire Spawn (3): hp 30, 23, 21; *Monster Manual* 182.

Tactics: The maids avoid confrontation and attempt to relay the PCs' whereabouts to the closest Heptad members.

Development: If battle erupts here, Hawthorne (see area 8 below) joins the fray the following round.

8. Butler's Quarters.

This chamber is tastefully decorated except that it contains a glossy mahogany coffin instead of a bed. A small plush chair is nestled in one corner next to an end table. Several paintings adorn the walls.

Hawthorne, the butler, has been transformed into a vampire spawn under the Heptad's control. The paintings hanging on the walls depict seasonal landscapes; Hawthorne painted these himself (when he was alive), but they are not valuable.

Creature (EL 4): Hawthorne is tall, middle-aged, and wears a wrinkled suit. During the day, he sleeps in his mahogany coffin. At night, he fastidiously adjusts the paintings on the walls or wanders about at the beck-and-call of the Heptad members.

Hawthorne, Vampire Spawn (1): hp 26; see *Monster Manual* 182.

9. Servants' Quarters. This windowless chamber is occupied by a quartet of *charmed* villagers from Briarwood. Erin, Nora, Jacqueline, and Leigh staff the kitchen (area 10) during the day, preparing meals for *charmed* victims of the Heptad. At night, they sleep here. The room contains four beds, a changing screen, and a wooden footlocker for personal belongings.

Creatures (EL –): The four women attempt to flee from the PCs and alert the Heptad at the first opportunity. If freed of the Heptad's *charm*, they remain with the PCs until an opportunity to flee the castle presents itself.

***Charmed* Servants, Female Human Com1 (4):** hp 3 each; see Chapter 2 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for complete statistics for commoner NPCs.

10. Kitchen.

Cabinets line the walls and sturdy worktables dominate the floor of this spacious kitchen. Cutlery and cookware adorn the walls. Two fireplaces contain warm embers.

The northern door leads to a staircase that descends to the castle's wine cellar (area 45).

Creatures (EL –): During the day, this kitchen is staffed by four *charmed* women from Briarwood. See area 9 for details.

11. Great Hall.

A T-shaped oak table surrounded by a score of high-backed chairs dominates this hall. A brick fireplace occupies the north wall, while the west wall has three great windows overlooking the gardens. Between the windows hang two great tapestries.

Treasure: The tapestries are worth 450 gp apiece, but they each weigh 50 lbs.

12. Trophy Gallery. This room contains prized trophies that the Heptad has collected. The walls are adorned with the stuffed heads and antlers of countless animals. Arranged about the floor are stuffed creatures in threatening poses, including a particularly frightening krenshar. Against the north wall stands an unlocked glass display case.

Treasure: The items in the display case include a pair of unicorn horns (1,000 gp each), a golden holy symbol taken from a slain cleric of Pelor (150 gp), a minotaur's horn, and a medusa's scaly hand (mummified).

13a. Library.

The walls of this library are lined with bookcases that nearly touch the 15-foot-high ceiling. Three sets of tables and chairs fill the room.

The bookcases hold hundreds of tomes covering an assortment of topics including natural science, politics, history, cartography, and literature. There are no books on magic or magic-related subjects (like alchemy).

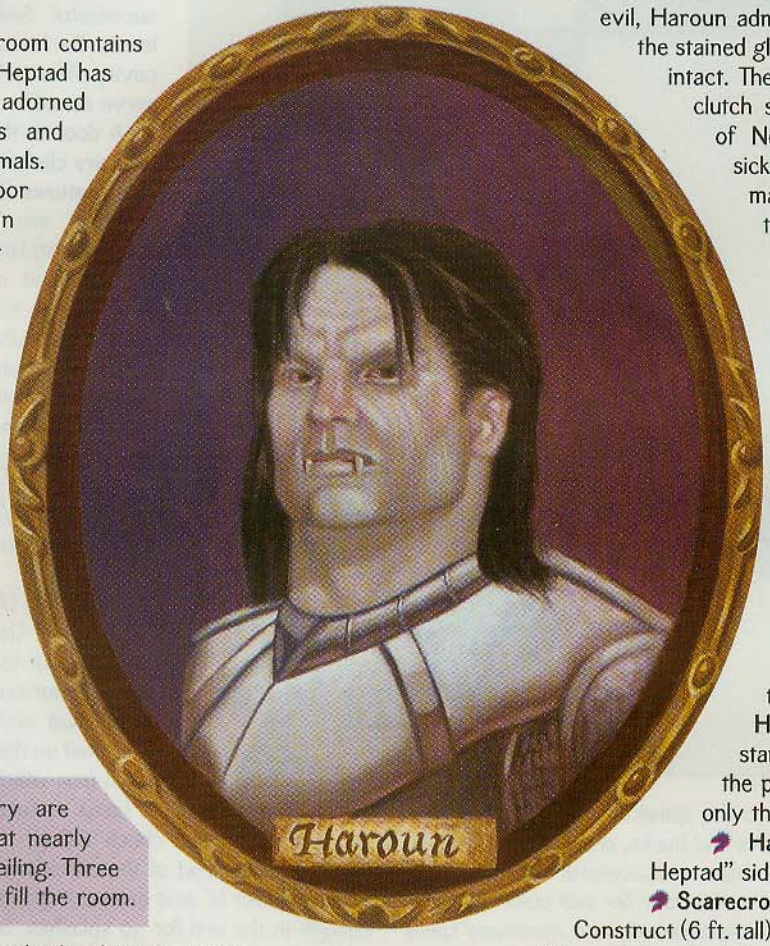
A secret door in the south wall requires a successful Search skill check (DC 15) to locate. It can be opened on this side only by pulling on a fake book titled *The Secret Ways* or by casting a *knock* spell.

13b. Study. This wood-paneled room once contained a desk and chair, but these furnishings were moved to area 22. A secret door in the north wall requires a successful Search skill check (DC 15) to locate. It can be opened on this side only by pulling on an iron candelabra mounted to the nearby wall.

14. Temple.

This chamber has a 30-foot-high vaulted ceiling with stone arches. The entire west wall is actually an intricate stained glass window depicting a celestial figure performing various miracles with ordinary folk looking on. In front of the window sits a stone altar flanked by a pair of crude, freestanding scarecrows. Each scarecrow clutches a long tree branch surmounted by a broken skull and rusted sickle.

Overlooking the temple is a railed balcony dominated by an immense pipe organ. An iron-wrought spiral staircase provides access to the balcony.



This temple, formerly dedicated to Pelor, has been converted to Haroun's dark god, Nerull. Though evil, Haroun admires the craftsmanship of the stained glass window and has kept it intact. The straw-stuffed scarecrows clutch staves bearing the symbol of Nerull (a broken skull and sickle). If attacked or commanded to attack by Haroun, the scarecrows spring to life, dropping the staves and raking with their claws. See **Creatures** below for details.

The altar contains a secret compartment. It can be found with a successful Search skill check (DC 25) and is locked, requiring a successful Open Locks skill check (DC 22) to open. The compartment contains the **Treasure.**

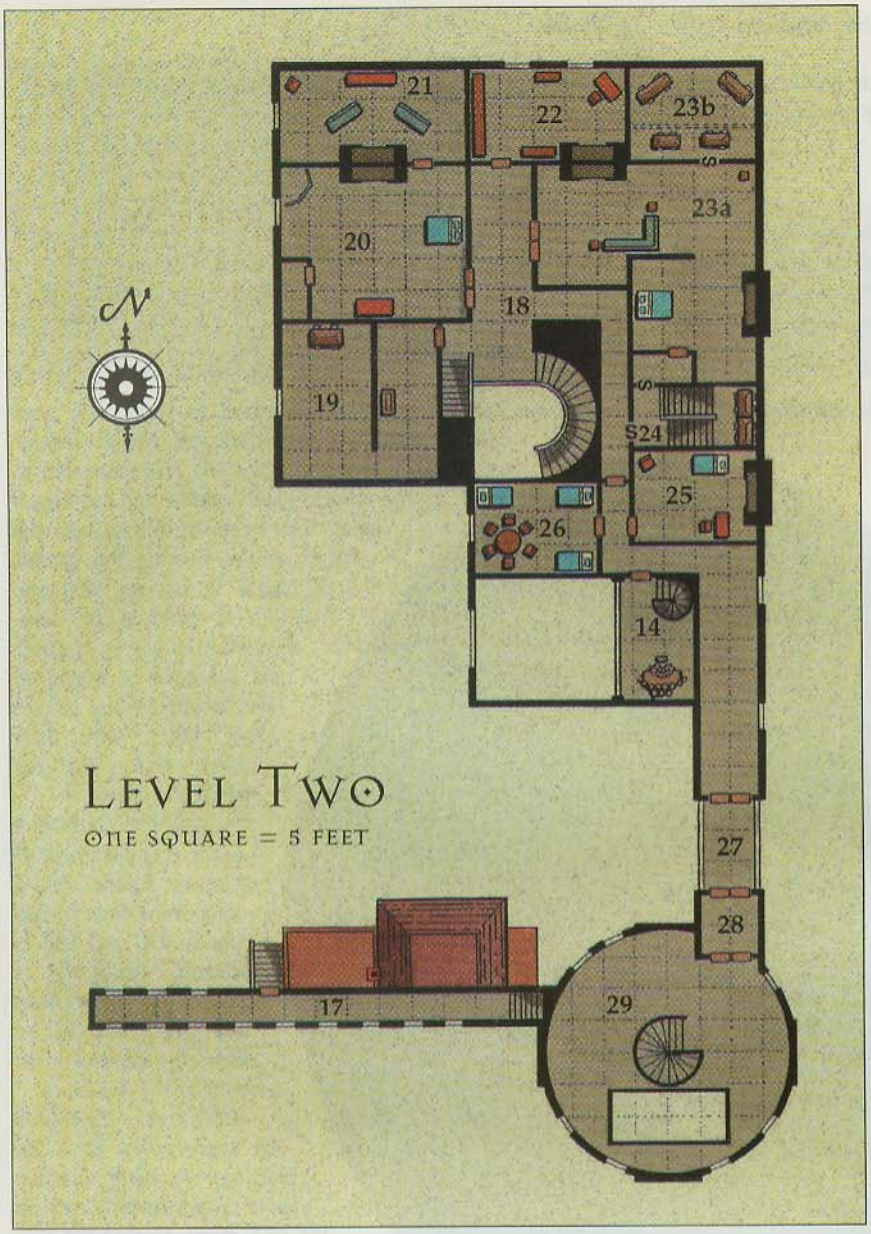
Creatures (EL 6 for the scarecrows, EL 11 for Haroun): At night, Haroun stands on the balcony next to the pipe organ. During the day, only the scarecrows are present.

Haroun: hp 80; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Scarecrows (2): CR 4; Medium-Size Construct (6 ft. tall); HD 6d10; hp 30 each; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d6+1, claw); SA holding gaze, holding touch; SQ construct, darkvision 60 ft., fire vulnerability (takes double damage from fire except on a successful save); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 12, Dex 13, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

SA–Holding Gaze (Su): Once per round, as a standard action, a scarecrow can focus its gaze on one creature within 40 feet. Any intelligent humanoid of Medium-size or smaller that meets the scarecrow's gaze must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 13) or be held (as the *hold person* spell). The effect lasts 6 rounds.

SA–Holding Touch (Su): If the scarecrow scores a hit with its claw attack, the victim must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 13) or be *held* (as above).



Tactics: Haroun *animates* the spiral stairway with *animate object*. The stairway shudders and bucks, and anyone trying to climb or descend it must make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 18) or be thrown to the floor for 2d6 points of damage. Haroun follows up with *hold person* and *command* spells while ordering the scarecrows to attack.

Treasure: The secret compartment in the altar contains a pewter offering plate (10 gp), a pewter chalice (20 gp), a curved dagger set with an opal (200 gp), and the *wand of restoration* (50 charges) stolen from Franz Aldrich. The command phrase for the wand is "May Pelor save thee!" Despite Valdemar's command, Haroun has not destroyed the *wand*. He plans on destroying it during an elaborate ceremony to Nerull.

15. Armory. This hallway is used to store weapons. The east wall holds twelve masterwork shields and twelve composite longbows. Four long wooden trunks against the west wall hold twelve masterwork longswords wrapped in oiled cloth. An oak barrel pushed into one corner contains 250 arrows.

16. Barracks.

The ground floor of the tower is a single 40-foot-diameter chamber with a flagstone floor. Arrow slits along the walls have been sealed with stone.

This room holds nine dwarven vampire spawn. Valdemar and Raven fought these dwarves, drained their energy, and presented the entire troop to Valk as a gift. Valk uses them as castle defenders.

The room appears bare but actually contains nine stone trapdoors in the floor (marked T on the map) that require a successful Search check (DC 15) to locate. Each hides a 5-foot-square stone cavity filled with fist-sized stones that serve as coffins for the undead dwarves.

A door in the west wall leads to a set of stairs climbing to area 17.

Creatures (EL 10): The nine vampiric dwarves are armed with battleaxes, wear breastplates, and possess the Cleave feat (instead of the Skill Focus feat). They prefer to use weapons instead of their energy drain attack. If reduced to 0 hit points, they assume *gaseous form* and return to their coffins in the floor.

Dwarven Vampire Spawn (9): AC 20 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, +5 breastplate); hp 42, 40, 35, 31 (×3), 30, 29, 26; Atk +5 melee (1d8+3/crit ×3, battleaxe); see *Monster Manual* 182 for complete stats.

Level Two (Areas 17-29)

17. Defense Corridor. The south wall of this 70-foot-long corridor is lined with twelve shuttered windows, three on the north wall and nine on the south wall. Mounted on the wall by the northern door is an iron winch for opening and closing the doors to the castle (area 1). Turning the winch requires a successful Strength check (DC 15).

At the west end of the corridor sits a stone urn filled with acid. A splash of acid deals 2d6 points of damage, and there is enough in the urn for 30 splashes. Six iron ladles hang on the wall above the stone urn and can be used to pour the acid. All window sills are carved with troughs and spouts that allow the acid to be poured onto enemies trying to scale the wall or breach the gate.

The northern set of stairs lead down to the courtyard (area 5), while the eastern stairs descend to the barracks (area 16).

Creatures (EL 8): Eight animated suits of full plate armor are stationed here at all times. They wield greatswords or longbows (taken from area 15). They also have instructions to pour acid onto anyone trying to scale the castle wall or break through the doors in area 1. The suits of armor do not pursue PCs beyond the corridor.

Animated Suits of Armor (8): CR 2; Medium-Size Construct (6 ft. tall); HD 2d10; hp 19, 18, 16, 12, 10 (×2), 9 (×2); Init

+0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (+8 full plate); Atk +2 melee (2d6+1/crit 19-20, greatsword) or +2 melee (1d6+1, slam); SQ Hardness 10, improved speed, construct; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

18. Upstairs Hall. Winding stairs lead down to area **6**, while the southern staircase climbs to area **30**. Aside from a long brown carpet that stretches from the stairs to the northern door, this hall is empty.

19. Haroun's Suite. This suite belongs to Haroun and is divided into two areas: a worship area and a living room.

The worship area consists of a simple stone altar situated beneath an oil painting depicting a plague-ridden city. A pillow rests in front of the altar.

The living area contains a locked wooden chest, a wooden mannequin (outfitted in masterwork full plate during the day), and Haroun's coffin, which is made of thick mahogany held shut by four large iron clasps. Tiny holes in the back of the coffin allow Haroun to enter and leave in *gaseous form*. The iron clasps can be unlocked only from inside the coffin, though a *knock* spell or successful Open Lock skill check (DC 27) will also work. Forcing the lid requires tools and a successful Strength check (DC 25). Prying open the coffin or tampering with the iron clasps triggers a **Trap**.

The chest requires a successful Open Locks skill check (DC 21) to open. Its contents are described under **Treasure** below.

Trap (EL 3): The coffin lid is trapped with a *glyph of warding* that releases a *summon monster III* spell. The summoned creature, a fiendish (Abyssal) dire bat, attacks the coffin's violators until destroyed or until 9 rounds have elapsed (at which point it vanishes). The fiendish dire bat's statistics are given under **Creatures** below.

Creatures (EL 11 for Haroun): During the day, Haroun is resting in his coffin. He awakens to the sound of intruders in his room and exits the coffin in *gaseous form*. If unable to don his masterwork full plate armor, he slips through cracks in the walls and heads to area **23**, making a stand with Valdemar and Raven. If able to don his armor, he confronts his foes here.

Haroun: hp 80; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Abyssal Dire Bat (1): CR 3; Large Animal (12-ft. wingspan); HD 4d8+12; hp 30; Init +6 (Dex); Spd 20 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 20 (-1 size, +6 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +5 melee (1d8+4, bite); Face 10 ft. × 5 ft.; SA smite good 1/day (+4 damage bonus); SQ blindsight, darkvision 60 ft.; cold and fire resistance 10; damage reduction 5/+1; SR 8; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 17, Dex 22, Con 17, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +11*, Move Silently +11, Spot +11*. Skills marked with an asterisk drop by 4 if the bat's blindsight is negated.

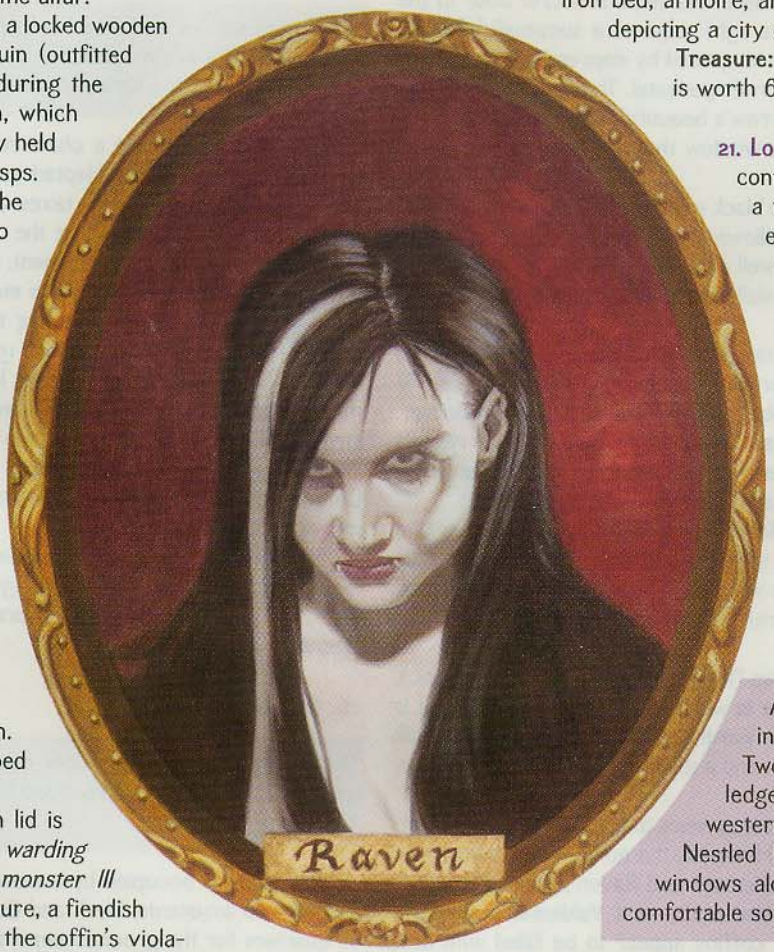
Treasure: Haroun's armor is masterwork full plate emblazoned with the symbol of Nerull. The chest contains a masterwork dire flail, a *+1 animated buckler*, a *cloak of elvenkind*, and a pouch holding six amethysts (worth 250 gp each).

20. The Green Room. This is the finest guest chamber in the castle with a walk-in closet, a view of the garden (area 2), and an adjoining lounge (area **21**). The walls are painted deep emerald green, and the room is furnished with a wrought iron bed, armoire, and a silk changing screen depicting a city of fire.

Treasure: The silk changing screen is worth 600 gp intact.

21. Lounge. This cozy chamber contains a pair of plush sofas, a table with two ornate but empty vases on it, and a rocking chair. Three oil paintings and three tapestries adorn the walls. This lounge is reserved for guests and is currently unoccupied.

Treasure: The oil paintings depict landscapes and are worth 50 gp each. The three tapestries are worth 200 gp each.



22. Study.

An ebony desk is pushed into the northeast corner. Two bookcases packed with ledgers stand against the western and southern walls. Nestled between the curtained windows along the north wall is a comfortable sofa.

Valdemar uses this room as his study. The books and ledgers contain tax information on Briarwood.

The desk has two locked drawers, requiring a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 25) to open. The first drawer has a **Trap** and contains the **Treasure**. The second drawer contains papers and scrolls left by Lord Blair Morrow, including a deed to the castle and its estate.

Trap (EL 10): Opening the first drawer without first depressing a hidden latch releases poisonous gas (burnt othur fumes). This trap requires a successful Search check (DC 27) to locate and a successful Disable Device check (DC 25) to disarm.

Poison Gas Trap: CR 10; burnt othur fumes (DC 18; initial 1d6 temporary Constitution, secondary 3d6 temporary Constitution); Search (DC 27); Disable Device (DC 25).

Treasure: The first drawer contains some blank pieces of parchment, a pouch of 15 banded agates (worth 200 gp each), and two potions (*fire breath* and *Wisdom*).

23a. Lord's Suite.

This suite consists of two rooms: a comfortable living area and bedchamber. An overstuffed sectional sofa lines one wall of the living area, flanked by a pair of iron tables. A marble pedestal surmounted by the plaster bust of an aristocratic woman stands in the northeast corner. The bedchamber contains a large, canopied bed and a free-standing mirror. A huge tapestry depicting a dark forest spans the east wall.

Valdemar and Raven share this suite. A secret door in the north wall (leading to area **23b**) requires a successful Search check (DC 22) to locate. It is opened by depressing the eyes of the plaster bust on the corner pedestal. The bust depicts Lady Sarah Morrow, Lord Morrow's beautiful wife.

The tapestry covers a window that has been sealed with a *stone shape* spell.

The bedchamber has a black iron bed with a canopy draped in silk. Silk sheets and pillows grace the bed. A small closet holds Raven's gowns as well as a secret door leading to area **24**. A successful Search skill check (DC 20) locates the secret door. It pulls open easily.

Stuffed in the bedchamber fireplace is the blood-drained corpse of Lord Blair Morrow, former lord of the castle. He wears a bloodied nightrobe, and his face is twisted in horror. A *speak with dead* spell cast on Lord Morrow's remains reveals that he was slain by Valdemar and Raven for no apparent reason after serving them faithfully for years.

Creature (EL 12 if Valdemar is present): Lord Valdemar can be found here at night, staring contemplatively into the cold fireplace along the north wall. He is the leader of the Heptad (although his reign is secretly challenged by Lachlan) and ruler of Caer Morrow.

Valdemar: hp 89; see "the Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Treasure: The tapestry is worth 900 gp. The silk bed set is worth 250 gp. Raven's wardrobe consists of twenty silk gowns, each worth 50 gp, and a silver fox cloak worth 500 gp.

23b. Crypt. This secret room appears to be a shallow closet containing two plain coffins. However, the north wall is actually an *illusory wall* that hides Valdemar's and Raven's true coffins.

Creatures (EL 5 for elementals, +11 if Valdemar and Raven are present): The "fake" coffins appear to be filled with dirt, but these are actually earth elementals. If the dirt is disturbed in any way, the elementals attack, possibly gaining surprise.

During the day, Valdemar and Raven are resting in their hidden coffins, which are sealed shut with iron latches (similar to Haroun's coffin in area **19**). Both coffins contain **Treasure**.

Medium-Size Earth Elementals (2): hp 38, 32; *Monster Manual* 82-83.

Valdemar: hp 89; see "the Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Raven: hp 64; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Tactics: When they hear the earth elementals rise and attack, Valdemar and Raven exit their coffins in *gaseous form* and cling to the crypt ceiling using their *spider climb* ability, hoping to catch intruders by surprise. If hard-pressed, they flee to round up the rest of the Heptad.

Treasure: Buried in the earth in Valdemar's coffin are 200 pp and a teakwood box (worth 75 gp) containing 22 assorted gems worth 1,000 gp (×5), 500 gp (×7), and 100 gp (×10) respectively. Buried in Raven's coffin are three potions (*cure moderate wounds, bull's strength,* and *jump*) and a *gem of brightness* (10 charges) in a black metal box (unlocked).

24. Secret Staircase and Crypt. This secret room can be reached via secret doors, each of which requires a successful Search check (DC 20) to locate. On the landing, Valdemar and Raven each maintain a spare wooden coffin. The stairs connect Levels Two and Three.

25. Accountant's Quarters.

This room serves as a bedchamber and office. Tucked next to the fireplace is a nondescript desk and chair. To the left is a modest bed with a lumpy mattress and an old plush chair.

This room belongs to a *charmed* human named Ezer. Ezer secures supplies for the Heptad and keeps the paperwork in order. He keeps notes on taxes as well as information on Briarwood's citizens (including the names of *charmed* townsfolk). His desk contains parchment, quills, and inkpots.

A loose stone in the fireplace mantle hides a compartment containing the **Treasure**. Locating the loose stone requires a successful Search skill check (DC 15).

Creature (EL –): Ezer is a quiet little man with wrinkles and thinning brown hair. He carries a small key that opens the iron strongbox hidden in this room (see **Treasure** below).

Ezer Finch, *Charmed* Male Human Com1: hp 2; see Chapter 2 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for typical commoner NPC statistics.

Treasure: Hidden in the fireplace's secret compartment is a locked iron strongbox containing 150 gp and 225 sp. Ezer uses this money to fund occasional forays into town for supplies (see area **26** below for details).

26. Servants' Quarters.

Three bunk beds fill this room, each with matching footlockers. A scuffed table surrounded by six rickety chairs completes the furnishings.

This room is occupied by a merchant named Lorimer Kren and his two assistants, Dyrk and Garth. The room also serves as quarters for the groundskeepers (see area **5** for details).

The footlockers are not locked and contain personal effects but nothing of value.

Creatures (EL 3): Lorimer is a fat merchant from Hookhill who, along with his assistants, was captured and *charmed* by the Heptad while traveling through Briarwood. The trio make frequent forays to Briarwood to gather supplies and secure cattle blood from the *charmed* butcher. As *charmed* servants of the Heptad, they try to lure the PCs into traps.

Lorimer Kren, *Charmed* Male Human Exp3: hp 14; see Chapter 2 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for typical expert NPC statistics.

Dyrk Landau and Garth Marsten, *Charmed* Male Human Com2 (2): hp 8, 5; see Chapter 2 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for typical commoner NPC statistics.

27. Causeway. The oak doors leading to the main keep and adjoining tower are locked from the outside and require a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 15) or *knock* spell to open.

28. Guard Room. This 10-foot-square chamber contains four sets of full plate armor, two each on the west and east walls. These are actually the **Creatures.**

Creatures (EL 6): All four suits of armor animate and attack when a living creature tries to cross the room. They do not pursue foes beyond the confines of the tower (areas 28, 29, 40, and 41).

Animated Suits of Armor (4): hp 16, 15, 12, 11; see area 17 for full statistics.

29. Training Room.

Six straw-stuffed dummies stand near the west wall, their torsos shot full of arrows. Mounted on the east wall are two large steel shields, a battleaxe, a greatsword, and a warhammer. To the south, someone has painted a 10-foot by 20-foot section of the floor white with a thick black border. A flat metal box rests on the floor nearby.

When a creature steps onto the 10-foot by 20-foot "sparring strip," three pairs of skeletal arms fly out of the flat metal box and grab the weapons off the walls. Silently, they await commands to fight anyone on the strip. Calling out the names of one or more weapons begins the match. Shouting the command word "Cease" ends all matches.

Creatures (EL –): The animated skeletal arms fight only when ordered.

Animated Skeletal Arms (3 pairs): CR 2; Medium Construct; HD 2d10; hp 10 each; Init +2 (Dex); Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect); AC 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +3 melee (by weapon type +1, see below); SQ construct; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -5; Str 13, Dex 15, Con –, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1.

Tactics: Each pair of skeletal arms has been "programmed" to mimic different feats and wield specific equipment:

#	Feats	Equipment
1	Expertise	battleaxe (1d8+1/crit ×3)
	Improved Trip	large steel shield (+2 AC)
2	Weapon Focus	greatsword (2d6+1/crit 19-20)
	Sunder	
3	Power Attack	warhammer (1d8/crit ×3)
	Improved Bull Rush	large steel shield (+2 AC)

Level Three (Areas 30-41)

30. Landing. A thick blue carpet stretches along the north end of this landing. A staircase descends to area 18.

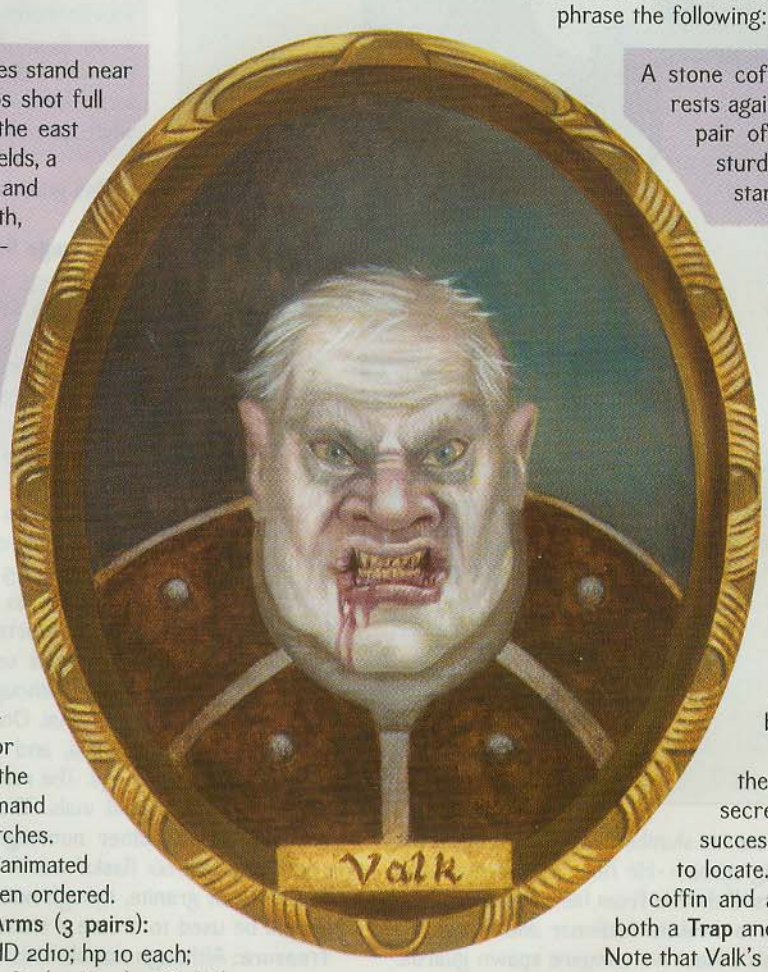
Members of the Heptad might ambush the party here, using bull rush actions to knock PCs over the rail. A fall to the ground floor from this height deals 3d6 points of damage.

31. Valk's Suite. This suite consists of two rooms. When the PCs enter the north room, read or paraphrase the following:

This unremarkable room has bare stone walls adorned with a bizarre assortment of weapons. The floor is also bare.

When the PCs enter the south room, read or paraphrase the following:

A stone coffin engraved with runes rests against the west wall under a pair of bricked-up windows. A sturdy walnut table and chair stand by the south wall.



This "suite" is inhabited day and night by Valk. The south room serves as the dwarf vampire's crypt, while the north room is where Valk hones his fighting skills.

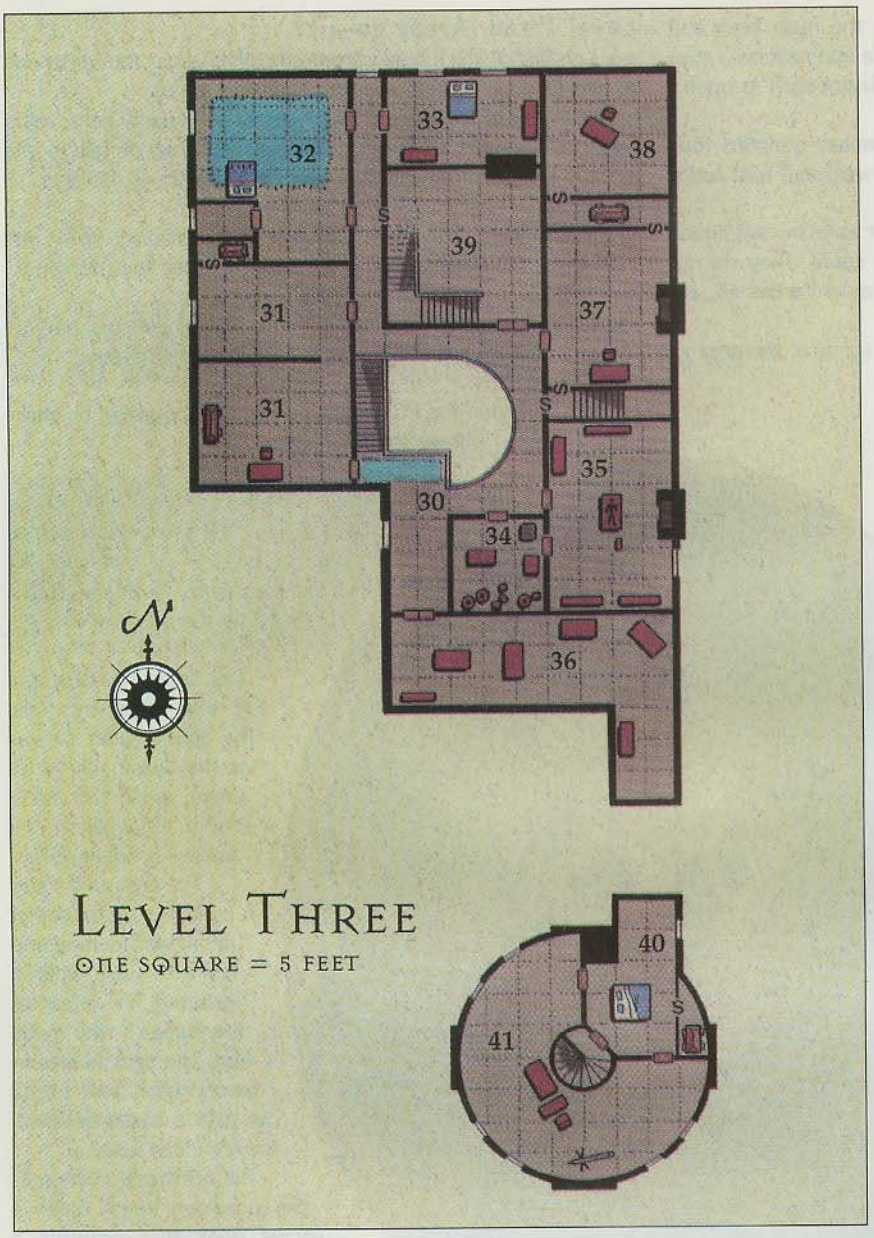
The engraved runes on Valk's coffin depict important moments in his life (and unlife), including his defeat of the vampire who made him. The desk comes in handy when Valk needs to plan a castle defense, but it's clean now.

The northeast corner of the northern room hides a secret door that requires a successful Search check (DC 20) to locate. It contains a spare stone coffin and a locked chest containing both a **Trap** and **Treasure.**

Note that Valk's coffin is locked–requiring a successful Open Lock check (DC 30) to open–and has tiny holes bored into its sides, allowing the dwarf vampire to enter and exit in *gaseous form.*

The weapons on the wall of the practice room include a dire flail, a dwarven urgrosh, a pair of crossed shortspears, a masterwork greataxe, and a heavy crossbow specially designed to fire 13-inch-long wooden stakes. (There are no stakes here, however.) All of the weapons were taken from Valk's vanquished foes. The crossbow belonged to a vampire hunter, and its trigger has been disabled. A successful Craft (weaponsmithing) check (DC 15) is required to repair the trigger.

Creature (EL 9): During the day, Valk rests in his stone coffin, handaxe on his chest. At night, he is battling and shouting at unseen foes in the practice room.



If the PCs rouse him from his slumber, Valk leaps out of his coffin with a bloodcurdling scream. He flees in *gaseous form* if reduced to half hit points. If driven from his suite during the day, he heads to area **23b** to awaken Valdemar and Raven. At night, he goes to area **16** to collect his vampire spawn guards.

Valk: hp 63; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Trap (EL 2): The chest in the secret room is rigged to spray ankheg acid if opened without the proper key (which is in Valk's possession). The acid splashes anyone standing within 5 feet of the chest.

Acid-Spraying Chest: CR 2; 5-ft. radius; 4d4 points of acid damage plus 1 point of splash damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 17) for half damage; Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 25).

Treasure: The chest contains a sack of 150 pp, three gold bracelets (100 gp each), and a diamond-studded necklace (850 gp) that originally belonged to Lady Sarah Morrow. The chest has a false bottom that can be located with a successful Search skill check (DC 30) and contains floorplans to Caer Morrow, including all secret doors and passages.

32. The Blue Room.

The walls of this bedroom are painted in shades of blue, gray, and white, simulating waves. A handsome blue carpet, weathered sea chest, and simple wooden bed round out the furnishings.

This guest room is unoccupied. The sea chest is unlocked and empty, as is the adjoining closet.

33. The Red Room.

This bedroom has a deep cherry hardwood floor. A light red bed, dresser, and wardrobe round out the furnishings. The walls are painted mauve, and white tapestries cover the windows.

This guest room is unoccupied.

34. Storage Room.

This room seems cluttered and disorganized. Bits of lab equipment cover a pair of tables, while several casks and crates are pushed against the south wall. In the northeast corner rests a 7-foot-tall solid block of granite.

This room serves as a preparation and storage room for Bathica's laboratories (areas **35** and **36**).

The tables are cluttered with glassware, retorts, mortars, pestles, and other tools used in alchemical experiments. Although dirty, the equipment is functional. One crate contains six flasks of acid, and another holds 100 tindertwigs. The rest hold empty beakers, jars, and vials. The casks hold lime, salt, oil, water, and various other nonmagical substances. However, one cask contains six flasks' worth of alchemical fire.

The block of granite, though nonmagical, is extremely pure and could be used to create a stone golem or construct.

Treasure: Although not obvious, the lab equipment is worth 1,500 gp intact. The block of granite weighs about 5,000 lbs. and is worth 1,000 gp to an interested buyer.

35. Workroom.

Four cabinets line the walls of this chamber. A lectern stands next to a worktable in the middle of the room, upon which rests an assembled suit of full plate armor. Under the worktable lay an assortment of armor fragments.

Bathica and Lachlan have converted this bedchamber into a lab where they create and experiment on magic items. They also use this room to create the animated suits of armor that defend the castle.

The cabinets are packed with spell components, chemicals, and oddities, including a balance with six platinum calibration weights (detailed under **Treasure** #1 below). The armor is masterwork full plate. The lectern holds a secret compartment that can be located with a successful Search skill check (DC 25) that contains **Treasure** #2.

Treasure #1: The platinum weights are worth 250 gp total.

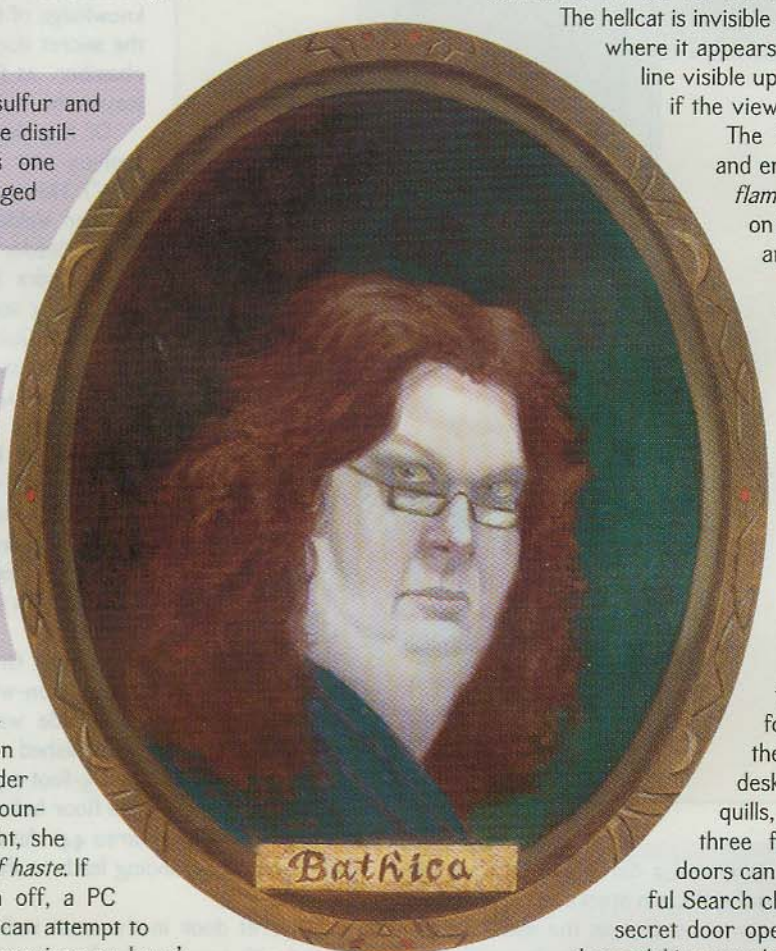
Treasure #2: The secret compartment in the lectern contains a book titled *Sentinels of Stone,* scribed by a wizard named Nerune. The first half the book details the process for making stone golems (see page 110 of the *Monster Manual*). The second half of the book contains the following spells: *geas, limited wish, polymorph any object,* and *slow.* The book could be sold for 8,000 gp to an interested buyer.

36. Alchemy Lab.

This chamber reeks of sulfur and other chemicals. Elaborate distillation equipment covers one of four worktables arranged about the room.

If the PCs explore this room at night, add the following:

A pudgy face peers from behind the glassware, thin spectacles perched on her nose, her bloodshot eyes wide with shock. The pale woman recovers quickly, ducking behind the table.



Bathica uses this lab to brew potions. The equipment is in pristine condition and detailed more fully under **Treasure** #1 below. If encountered here during the night, she is busy brewing a *potion of haste.* If Bathica is slain or driven off, a PC with the Brew Potion feat can attempt to complete the potion; this requires an hour's work and a successful Alchemy skill check (DC 18).

PCs who explore the worktables and make a successful Search skill check (DC 15) find **Treasure** #2.

Creature (EL 11 if Bathica is present): Bathica is here only at night. During the day, she rests in her coffin (area 40).

Bathica: hp 57; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Tactics: Bathica uses the workbench as half-cover while tossing flasks of acid at the PCs (one per round for 3 rounds). After depleting her supply of acid, she flees to alert the other members of the Heptad, assuming *gaseous form* if necessary.

Treasure #1: The alchemical equipment is worth 5,000 gp to an interested buyer.

Treasure #2: PCs searching the worktables find three flasks of acid (assuming Bathica hasn't spent them), the two potions of *negative energy protection* stolen from Franz Aldrich, and six potions brewed by Bathica: *bull's strength* (×2), *enlarge* (5th level), *fire breath, Intelligence,* and *tongues.*

37. Bathica's Study.

This shadowy chamber is illuminated by a small brazier tucked into the fireplace. Several worn pillows are tossed in front of the brazier. A heavy oak desk covered with stacks of parchment and half-melted candles stands against the south wall. Next to the desk is a pile of crumpled parchment.

Bathica uses this chamber as her private study, but it also serves as the lair for her hellcat companion, Talon. The hellcat is invisible except in darkened areas, where it appears as a faintly glowing outline visible up to 30 feet away (60 feet if the viewer has low-light vision). The brazier is made of iron and enchanted with a *continual flame* spell. The hellcat sleeps on the ragged pillows, which are covered with fur.

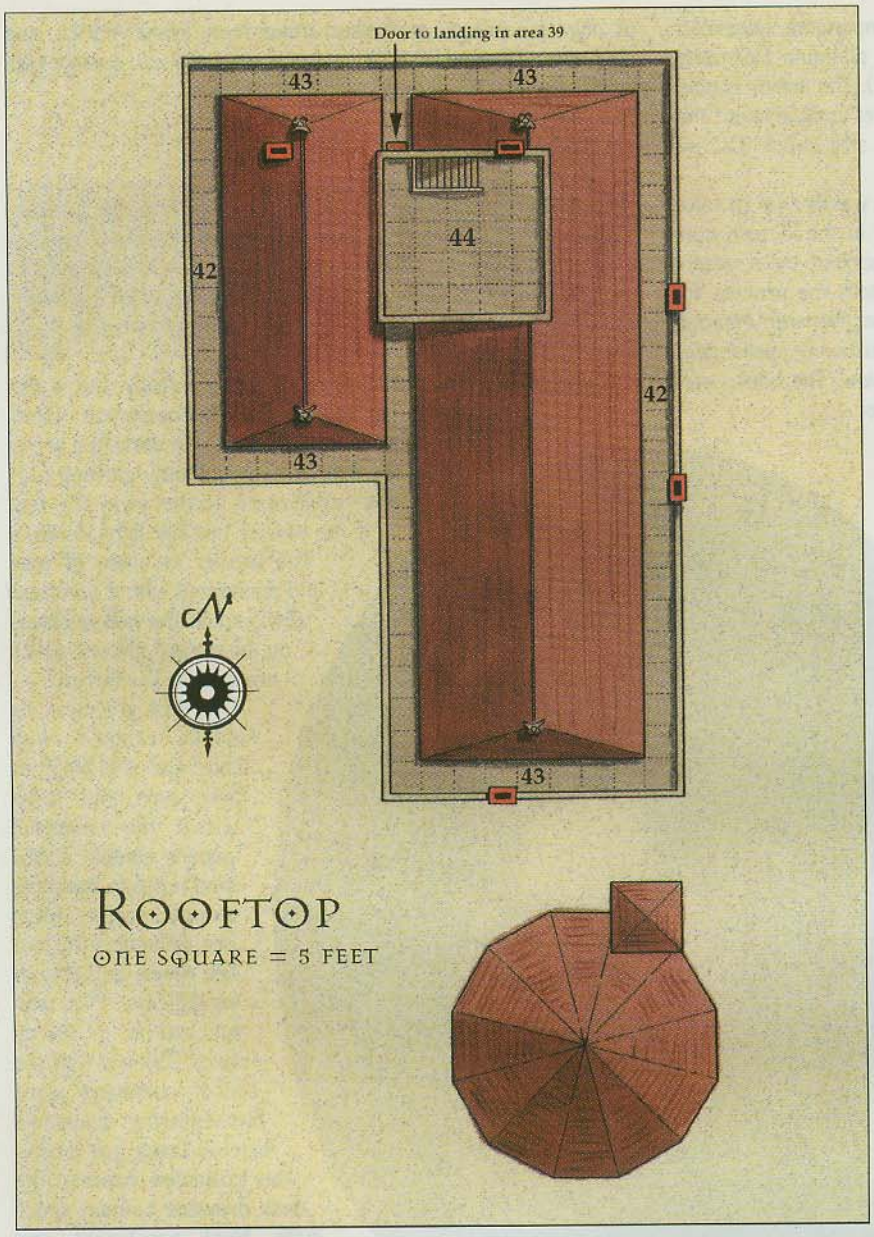
The desk is a mess, its surface stained with black and red blotches (ink spots and dried wine). The crumpled papers contain scribbled notes in Bathica's sloppy script. Most are alchemical formulas, notes, and lists of ingredients. PCs who succeed at a Search check (DC 20) find the secret command word for entering Lachlan's fortress (area 50) among the crumpled papers. The desk drawers contain spare quills, blank parchment, and three full inkpots. The secret doors can be located with successful Search checks (DC 20). The north secret door opens by depressing a hidden pedal in a nearby floorboard and leads to a 5-foot-deep, 20-foot-wide storage closet containing Bathica's spare coffin (which is not locked and contains the **Treasure**) and an identical but *arcane locked* secret door leading to area 38. The south secret door simply pulls open and leads to a staircase that descends to area 24.

Creature (EL 7): Talon pounces on the first PC to approach the desk, the brazier, or the secret door in the north wall, using its improved grab and rake to deal extra damage.

Talon, Hellcat (1): hp 52; *Monster Manual* 48-51 (devil).

Treasure: Buried in the dirt in Bathica's spare coffin is a *wand of silence* (16 charges; command word "Shhh!").

38. Secret Library. Bathica has cast an *arcane lock* spell on the secret door leading to this room.



The secret door opens to reveal a dark room packed with books. Books are piled on the floor in stacks as tall as 7 feet, and even more are strewn on a desk in the middle of the room. A single, large candle on the table sheds feeble light, casting long shadows about the room.

A startled figure pops up from behind the desk. She stands about 5 feet tall and wears a peasant blouse and skirt. Her facial features are pale and sharp, and dark circles have formed around her eyes.

This is Ardra, a farmer's daughter from Briarwood. Despite her sharp features, grim pallor, and dark-circled eyes, she is neither *charmed* nor a vampire. Recognizing her intelligence, Bathica spared the young girl's life, instead imprisoning her and forcing her to serve as an apprentice. Ardra is confined here, cataloging the contents of Bathica's library (which the Heptad only recently transported here). Ardra has also been reading most of the books, hence the sleepless eyes.

Ardra understands she is a prisoner, but she doesn't mind the captivity. She has never had the opportunity to read so many books. PCs must either drag her from the room or convince her to leave. You can have the PCs make Diplomacy skill checks (DC 22) or simply roleplay the encounter with Ardra.

Creature (EL –): Ardra poses no threat to the PCs. If the PCs ask her how she arrived here, she claims that she was attacked in her father's barn by Bathica and a "scary bald man," blindfolded, and brought to this chamber. She has no knowledge of the castle's layout, or even the secret door in the south wall of this chamber, as Bathica always enters and leaves the room in *gaseous form*.

Of the Heptad, Ardra has seen only Bathica and Lachlan (the "scary bald man"). However, she has heard Bathica mention Valdemar's name several times as the "leader" of the vampires.

Ardra Pitchfield, Female Human Com1: hp 3; see Chapter 2 in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* for typical commoner NPC statistics. Ardra has above average Intelligence (14).

Treasure: Bathica's library contains hundreds of books dealing with magic, alchemy, and wizard biographies, but no spellbooks. The books are worth 1d8 × 10 gp each, while the whole library is worth 2,000 gp. Feel free to include a tome important to your own campaign here.

39. Tower, Ground Floor. A slightly corroded, iron-wrought staircase clings to the inside wall of this 25-foot-square, unfurnished room. The iron stairs climb to a 5-foot-square landing 20 feet above the floor before climbing another 15 feet to the tower rooftop (area 44). An unlocked door on the north wall of the metal landing leads to the rooftop of the main keep (areas 42-43).

A secret door in the west wall (under the stairs) can be located with a successful Search skill check (DC 20). The stone door pivots on a central vertical axis and opens easily.

Creatures (EL 6): At night, four suits of animated full plate armor stand motionless along the north wall. Each suit has a strange glyph seemingly painted on its breastplate (see **Trap** below). The suits of armor attack any intruders who set foot in this area, pursuing them beyond the confines of the room if necessary. During the day, the suits of armor are patrolling the tower rooftop (area 44) and are not present.

Animated Suits of Armor (4): hp 18, 13, 10, 8; see area 17 for full statistics.

Trap (EL 3 per suit of armor): Haroun has placed a *glyph of warding* on each suit of armor, set to discharge the first time someone damages the suit with a melee attack. Each *glyph* discharges a blast of electricity that deals 4d8 points of damage

to all within 5 feet of the suit of armor. Note that the blast does not harm the suit of armor from which it originated.

↗ ***Glyphs of Warding*** **(4):** CR 3; 5-foot-radius; 4d8 points of electricity damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 19) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

40. Bathica's Chamber. Bathica has cast *arcane lock* spells on all of the doors to this room.

This chamber smells stale and appears to be a messy bedchamber. Heavy black tapestries, grayed with dust, cover the walls and block the window on the east wall. A huge bed with an overstuffed mattress dominates the center of the room, its sheets a twisted mess. Piles of dirty clothes litter the floor, and a dresser lines the east wall with several open drawers overflowing with unfolded apparel.

This messy chamber serves as Bathica's bedroom. Bathica can be found here during the day, resting in her hidden coffin (see below). Her room is also guarded by the **Creatures.**

The secret door in the east wall requires a successful Search skill check (DC 25) to find. The door opens by pulling down an empty torch holder set into the nearby wall.

The secret door hides a dusty, cobweb-filled closet containing Bathica's simple wooden coffin, which overflows with grave dirt. Next to the coffin is a locked chest that requires a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 22) to open. The chest is not trapped and holds the **Treasure.**

Creatures (EL 9, +5 if Bathica is present): Guarding this room are seven shadows allied with Bathica. They ambush intruders who approach the bed or the secret door in the east wall, hoping to gain surprise. During the day, Bathica is resting in her filthy coffin. As soon as intruders are detected, she assumes *gaseous form* and flees, not wishing to confront enemies alone. If she escapes, she drifts down the tower staircase and flies to the main keep to alert the other members of the Heptad, beginning with Haroun and Valk.

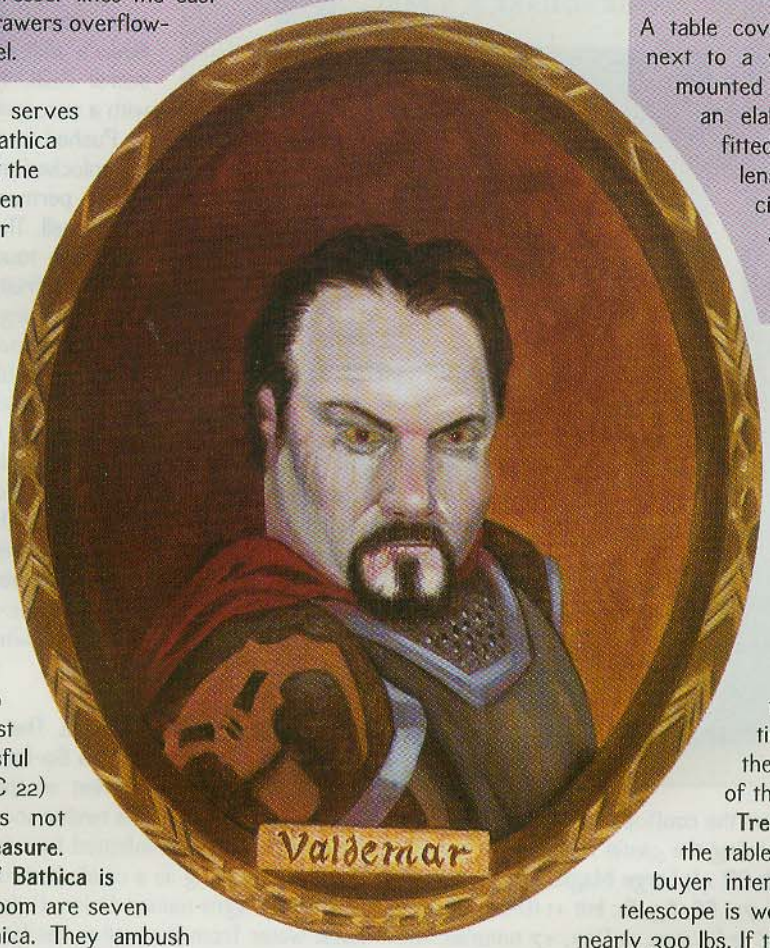
Shadows (7): hp 25, 19 (×4), 16, 13; *Monster Manual* 161.

Bathica: hp 57; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Treasure: The chest contains a wyvern skin pouch (10 gp) holding six pearls (worth 100 gp each), a small metal rack holding six potions, and an earthenware jug. The potions are all labeled: *cat's grace* (×2), *ghoul touch* (×2), and *oil of keen edge* (×2). The *oil of keen edge* works like the 3rd-level arcane spell *keen edge*, except that the oil must be applied to the weapon (requiring a full round action). The earthenware jug is a unique magic item, detailed below. Bathica took this item from a temple of Fharlanghn years ago.

¡ ***Healer's Jug:*** Three times per day, this earthenware vessel can transform any magic potion poured into it into a curative potion. Unfortunately, the jug is flawed insofar as the user cannot control what type of potion is produced; instead, roll a d10: 1-6, *cure light wounds;* 7-9 *cure moderate wounds;* 10, *cure serious wounds.*

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *cure serious wounds; Market Price:* 6,750 gp; *Weight:* 2 lb.



41. Observatory.

A table covered with charts stands next to a wooden desk. A swivel-mounted telescope comprised of an elaborate metal framework fitted with mirrors and crystal lenses is mounted on a semi-circular track on the floor, allowing it to slide in front of any one of the room's many windows.

Bathica uses this observatory from time to time. The desk holds parchment and notes on celestial events. Crude star charts and maps of constellations cover the table.

The telescope is an awkward contraption, but it slides easily along its well-oiled track. The telescope can be positioned in front of any of the windows to gain a view of the heavens.

Treasure: The star charts on the table are worth 200 gp to a buyer interested in astronomy. The telescope is worth 2,500 gp but weighs nearly 300 lbs. If the mirrors and lenses are removed, they can be sold for 2,000 gp total.

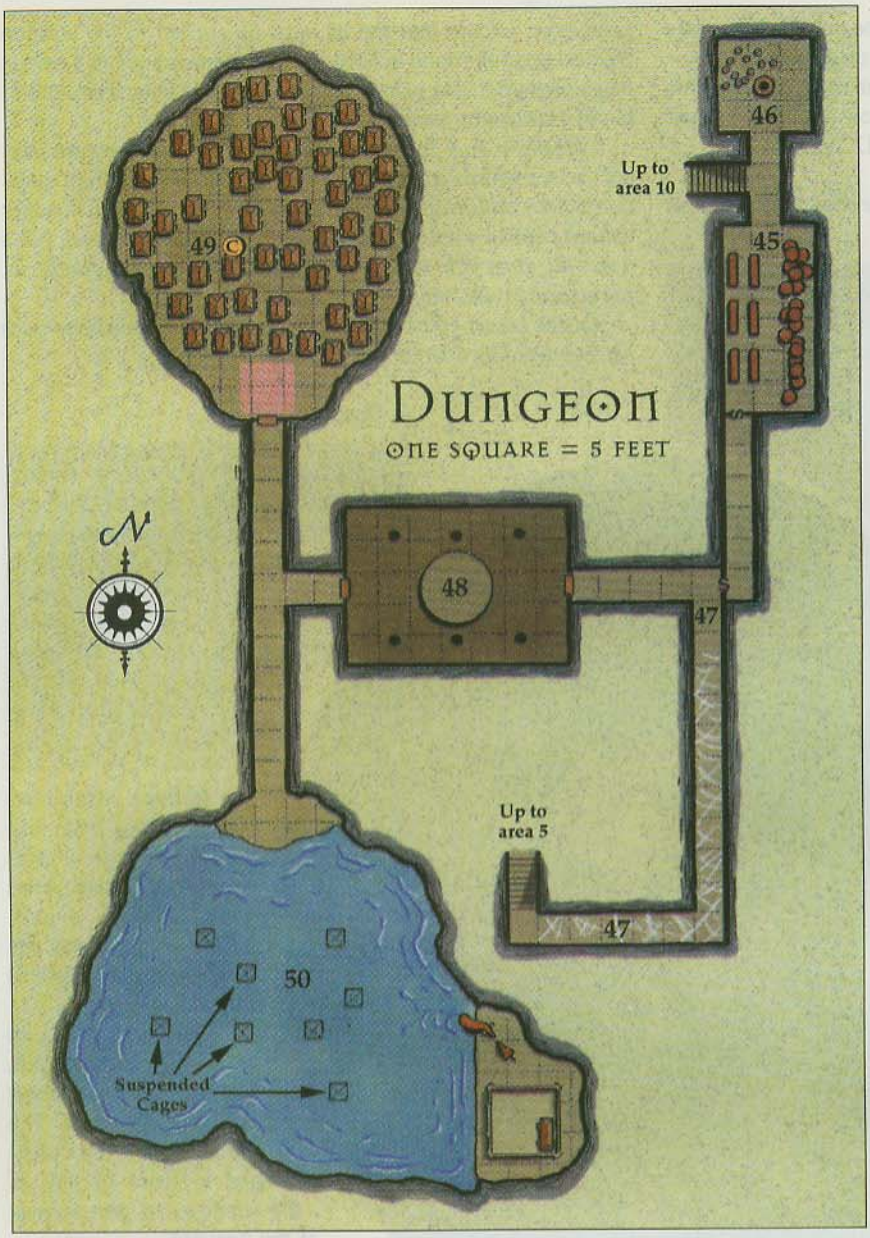
Rooftop (Areas 42-44)

42. Battlements. The rooftop is encircled by a 5-foot-wide walkway that can be accessed from a door on the northwest corner of the square tower. A 3-foot-high crenelated wall provides some cover.

Development: Visible characters who set foot on the castle roof are attacked by the gargoyles in area 43.

43. Gargoyles. Perched on the castle rooftop at each of these four locations is a particularly large gargoyle.

Creatures (EL 10): The four Large gargoyles obey Valdemar and Valk and have orders to attack any intruders they spot in



the courtyard (area 5) or on the rooftops. They also keep their eyes open for intruders scaling the castle walls.

Large Gargoyles (4): CR 4*; Large Magical Beast (Earth) (9 ft. tall); HD 7d10+28; hp 72, 68, 65, 61; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 45 ft., fly 75 ft. (average); AC 17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural); Atk +9 melee (1d6+4 [×2], 2 claws), +7 melee (1d8+4, bite), +7 melee (1d8+4, gore); SQ damage reduction 15/+1, freeze; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 19, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 7.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +4, Spot +4. *Feats:* Multiattack.

* Due to their Large size, the gargoyles are worth 175% XP.

Tactics: The gargoyles like to dive at targets, in which case treat their initial attack as a charge.

44. Tower Rooftop. The square tower has an open, flat roof enclosed by a 4-foot-high crenelated wall.

Creatures (EL 6, but see area 39): Four animated suits of armor patrol this area during the day. These are the same ones described in area 39. They fight until destroyed.

Development: The gargoyles perched on the rooftops (see area 43), fearful of the animated suits of armor, wait until the suits are destroyed before swooping in to attack.

Dungeon (Areas 45-50)

45. Wine Cellar.

This dank chamber is 15 feet wide and 30 feet long. An aisle bisects the room, with stacked wine casks to the east and racks of wine bottles to the west.

A secret door in the south wall leads to a cobweb-filled tunnel. A successful Search skill check (DC 15) locates the secret door, which can be pulled open with a successful Strength check (DC 12).

Pushed into the northeast corner is an unlocked iron "cold box" enchanted with a permanent variation of the *chill metal* spell. The box does not deal damage when touched. Inside the cold box are fresh fruit, vegetables, and ten clay jugs containing cattle blood—the Heptad's emergency stock. The vampires insist on warming the blood to at least room temperature before feeding on it.

Treasure: Caer Morrow boasts an impressive wine cellar. There are two dozen 50-gallon casks of common wine (5 gp each). The wine racks hold 85 bottles of fine wine (10 gp each).

Development: Characters who make a lot of noise awaken the *charmed* ogre in area 46, which investigates the following round.

46. Well. The 15-foot-square room contains a 60-foot-deep stone well. The last 10 feet of the well is filled with fresh water. Near the well are twelve 10-gallon wooden buckets.

A pile of maggot-infested furs fill the southwest corner of the room, serving as a crude bed for the chamber's occupant: a charmed ogre named Gulch. Gulch guards the dungeon and hauls water from the well to the kitchen (area 10).

Creature (EL 9): Gulch was exploring the Cauldron when he was spotted and *charmed* by Lythia. He has gangly arms and a pot belly. Immensely strong, this dumb brute has orders to introduce intruders to the business end of his greataxe.

Gulch, *Charmed* Male Ogre Ftr7: CR 9; Large Giant (9 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 4d8+12 (ogre) plus 7d10+21 (Ftr); hp 118; Init -2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (-1 size, -2 Dex, +5 natural, +3 hide armor), 19 (with +4 cover); Atk +18/+13 melee (1d12+6/crit ×3, masterwork greataxe); or +8/+3 ranged (1d3+6, hurled bucket); SQ cover (see *Possessions* below); AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 23, Dex 6, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 9, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +8, Listen +2, Spot +2. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus (greataxe). The Weapon Focus feat is already factored into the attack.

Possessions: Hide armor, tower shield (affords Gulch one-half cover in combat, granting a +4 cover bonus to AC and +2 cover bonus to Reflex saving throws), masterwork greataxe.

Development: If the *charm* is dispelled, Gulch can be persuaded (either through diplomacy or bribery) to join the PCs for the remainder of the adventure. This requires some careful roleplaying on the players' parts or a successful Diplomacy or Bluff skill check (DC 25). Once beyond the castle and the caldera, Gulch either attacks or abandons the PCs depending on how easily he thinks he can crush them or how fairly he feels he was treated by them.

47. Web-filled Hall. This corridor is choked with thick webs created by the dark naga's *web* spell (see area **48** for details). Fire can burn through the webs at a rate of 5 feet per round.

48. Temple of the Dark Naga.

Six dull black pillars support the 20-foot-high, vaulted ceiling of this damp room. A circular, 10-foot-wide stone altar rises from the bare stone floor. Atop the altar, a coiled snake with deep purple scales sways gently. It has a female human head and a tail ending in a barbed black stinger.

This room was once a cellblock, but Lachlan used *stone shape* and other spells to turn it into a temple dedicated to Erythnul, the god of slaughter. The top of the altar is shaped like Erythnul's symbol, as presented on page 90 of the *Player's Handbook*.

The floor is slippery. Any PC moving at more than her standard speed or engaging in melee combat here must make a successful Balance check (DC 15) each round or fall prone. The **Creature** swaying atop the altar is not hampered by the slipperiness.

Creature (EL 9): Lachlan befriended this chaotic dark naga several years ago and now counts her as a trusted ally. She guards the way to Lachlan's lair (area **50**).

Shandrylla, Dark Naga Clr1 (Erythnul): CR 9; Large Aberration (12 ft. long); HD 9d8+18 (naga) plus 1d8+2 (Clr); hp 63; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural); Atk +7 melee (2d4+2 and poison, sting), +2 melee (1d4+1, bite); Reach 10 ft.; SA poison, *detect thoughts,* spells (cast as Sor7), rebuke undead; SQ poison immunity, guarded thoughts; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +7 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +10 (+12 against charm effects); Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +16, Listen +11 (includes Alertness feat), Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +14, Spot +11 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes.

Sorcerer Spells (6/7/2*/5, chosen from the following list): 0—*daze, dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*charm person, chill touch, mage armor, shield, true strike;* 2nd—*protection from arrows, see invisibility, web;* 3rd—*gaseous form, haste.*

* Shandrylla periodically casts *web* spells in area **47**, reducing the number of 2nd-level spells she can cast in this encounter.

Cleric Spells (3/1+1): 0—*cure minor wounds* (×3); 1st—*cure light wounds, protection from law**.

* Domain spell. *Domains:* Chaos (cast chaos spells as Clr2), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Tactics: Upon hearing the approach of intruders, Shandrylla casts the following spells, in order: *mage armor, shield, protection from arrows, see invisibility, protection from law, resistance, haste,* and *chill touch.* In combat, the *hasted* naga casts *true strike* and attacks with her tail in the same round.

If overwhelmed by the PCs, the dark naga casts *gaseous form* and flees to area **50** to warn Lachlan.

49. Large Crypt. This 10-foot-high, roughly hewn chamber has two entrances: an unlocked but trapped door to the south (see **Trap #1** below), and an unlocked wooden trapdoor in the ceiling. The trapdoor lies at the bottom of a 30-foot-deep dry well (area **2**). **Trap #2** fills the 10-foot × 10-foot section of floor near the south door (as shown on the map).

Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs enter the room via the south door or trapdoor in the ceiling:

This rough-hewn chamber is only 10 feet tall but quite deep. Dozens of web-shrouded coffins fill the dark gloom, resting silently atop the earthen floor. In the north end of the room, a single torch casts long shadows upon the walls.

This room holds fifty-three wooden coffins, all of which are unlocked. Some of the coffins are quite old and have nearly rotted through; others are newer and intact. The Heptad allow their vampiric minions to use these coffins, while the Heptad members themselves use them only if their other coffins and spares are destroyed.

During the day, three vampire spawn rest in coffins near the space beneath the trapdoor in the ceiling. At night, they are hiding behind coffins, waiting to ambush any living creature that enters this room. The vampire spawn are not the only creatures present, however (see **Creatures** below).

Creatures (EL 9): This room is inhabited by three vampire spawn (the remains of a Briarwood farmer, his wife, and his adult son) and a will-o'-wisp (the "torch" in the northern end of the room). At night, PCs who are alert can make a Spot skill check opposed by the vampires' Hide skill checks to notice them lurking among the coffins.

Human Vampire Spawn (3): hp 32, 29, 26; *Monster Manual* 182.

Will-o'-Wisp (1): hp 48; *Monster Manual* 183-184.

Tactics: The will-o'-wisp fades away and becomes invisible if approached, attacking only when the PCs are vulnerable (that is, while they're battling the vampire spawn). The vampire spawn ignore the will-o'-wisp. It does not pursue PCs beyond this room. However, if all three vampire spawn are slain and the will-o'-wisp is unable to finish off the PCs, it smashes through the trapdoor in the ceiling, flies up the well, and hides out near the garden (area 2).

Trap #1 (EL 3): Haroun has trapped the south door with a *glyph of warding*. Any living creature that touches the door (from either side) triggers the *glyph*.

Glyph of Warding: CR 3; 5-foot-radius; 4d8 points of cold damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 19) for half damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Trap #2 (EL 6): Using a scroll of *greater glyph of warding*, Haroun has trapped a 10-foot-square area north of the southern door. When a living creature passes over the warded area, the *glyph* triggers a *slay living* spell. Only one creature is affected, but no attack roll is required. If the creature fails its Fortitude saving throw (DC 17), it dies; if the saving throw succeeds, the creature takes 3d6+10 points of damage instead.

Greater Glyph of Warding: CR 6; 10-foot × 10-foot area; death, Fortitude saving throw (DC 17) means 3d6+10 points of damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

50. Lachlan's Domain. This natural cavern serves as the domain for Lachlan, a reclusive member of the Heptad. The following description assumes that the PCs approach from the northern passage:

> The corridor opens into a natural cavern almost 60 feet in diameter with a 20-foot-high ceiling. The floor continues almost 10 feet before plunging into dark, stagnant water.

This cavern contains four areas of interest: the Watery Depths, the Dangling Cages, the Shelf of Bellows, and *Lachlan's Instant Fortress*. Each is dealt with in turn:

Watery Depths

The stagnant water is 10 feet deep near the cavern's edge and 20 feet deep in the middle. This small, underground lake is inhabited by the **Creatures**, which were driven out of the Cauldron by the undead elasmosaurus, Nyssa (see area **C**).

A 10-foot-high, 15-foot-wide fissure in the southwest corner of the cavern floor forms the mouth of a winding tunnel that opens into the Cauldron, but only *water breathing* PCs can navigate the tunnel without fear of drowning.

Creatures (EL 7): Six merrow live in the water. All have been *charmed* by Lachlan and serve him as guards. The merrow attack anyone entering the water. PCs who float within 10 feet of the water's surface also risk attack, as the merrow rise to the surface and skewer prey with their longspears.

Merrow (6): hp 31, 27 (×2), 26 (×2), 22; Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; Atk +7 melee (1d8+7/crit ×3, longspear); *Monster Manual* 144 (ogre).

Dangling Cages

Eight 7-foot-tall, rectangular metal cages hang from the ceiling by thick iron chains. They are locked and dangle 3 feet above the water's surface. Unlocking a cage door requires a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 18). Bending a cage's bars requires a successful Strength check (DC 28).

Each cage contains 1d4+1 villagers from Briarwood and other nearby settlements. The merrow torment the villagers from time to time, but they have strict orders not to harm the prisoners or damage the cages without Lachlan's permission.

Creatures (EL —): The villagers are dispirited, hungry, and sickly. They have been fed on by the vampires in moderation. As they beg and scream to be freed, their anguish is heard by all the other inhabitants in the cavern, including Lachlan.

Male and Female Human Com1 (1d4+1 per cage): hp 1 each; see Chapter 2 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for typical commoner NPC statistics.

Shelf of Bellows

This 30-foot-high, 30-foot-wide, 20-foot-deep shelf was carved with the aid of *stone shape* spells. Two **Creatures** stand guard on the shelf. Near the water's edge sits a huge horn, its wide end turned down toward the water. The horn is attached to massive bellows made of wood, iron, and flaps of sewn human flesh. Nearby stands a 20-foot-square iron tower with a door shaped like a demonic maw. This is *Lachlan's instant fortress* and serves as Lachlan's lair (detailed below).

Creatures (EL 2): A pair of 12-foot-tall fire giant skeletons armed with greatswords stand guard on the shelf. These skeletons were *animated* in a *desecrated* area and have +2 hp. Consider awarding +10% XP for these skeletons, as they have higher than average hit points.

Large Fire Giant Skeletons (2): hp 24 each; Atk +2 melee (2d6/crit 19-20, greatsword); *Monster Manual* 165 (skeleton).

Tactics: These skeletons aren't much of a challenge for the PCs. However, if they're not destroyed quickly, they can cause quite a lot of damage. At the first sign of intruders, the giant skeletons squeeze the bellows, causing the horn to howl eerily. Ten rounds later, Nyssa the undead lake monster (area **C**) emerges from the southwest fissure and attacks random targets (including any surviving merrow, which quickly vacate the cavern through the underwater fissure).

Once the horn is sounded, the skeletons have instructions to attack anyone attempting to penetrate the fortress.

Lachlan's Instant Fortress

This iron tower is a smaller version of the *Daern's instant fortress* described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 214), being 12 feet square and 25 feet tall with two arrow slits set into each wall, a pointed rooftop, and a door shaped like a demonic maw on the west side. The door can be opened only when the proper command word ("Agauthantra") is spoken.

Encounter Level Chart

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (ELs) for all of the encounters in "The Dying of the Light":

Area	Encounter Description	EL
–	Flit, Winged Cat (1)	–
–	Franz Aldrich, Male Human Exp4/Wiz4	–
–	Townsfolk, Human Com1 (32)	8
	Soldiers, Human War1 (10)	+1
A	Adult Winged Owlbears (6)	9
B	Juvenile Winged Owlbears (3)	7
C	Nyssa, Elasmosaurus Zombie (1)	10
1	Acid Trap (1)	2
2	Vampire Rose Bushes (6)	5
	Raven, Human Vampire Rgr8	+5
3	Willi, Human Male Vampire Spawn (1)	4
	Nightmares (2)	7
4	Lythia, Female Drow Vampire Rog7	9
	Poison Needle Trap (1)	3
5	*Glyph of Warding* Trap (1)	3
	Gorgon (1)	8
	Ravens (17)	
	Charmed Groundskeepers, Com1 (3)	
7	Maids, Vampire Spawn (3)	7
8	Butler, Vampire Spawn (1)	4
14	Scarecrows (2)	6
	Haroun, Human Vampire Clr9	11
16	Dwarves, Vampire Spawn (9)	10
17	Animated Suits of Armor (8)	8
19	*Glyph of Warding* Trap (1)	3
	Haroun, Human Vampire Clr9	11
22	Poison Gas Trap (1)	10
23a	Valdemar, Human Vampire Ftr10	12
23b	Medium-Size Earth Elementals (2)	5
	Valdemar, Human Vampire Ftr10	+6
	Raven, Human Vampire Rgr8	+5
26	Lorimer Kren, Male Human Exp3	4
	Dyrk and Garth, Male Human Com2 (2)	
28	Animated Suits of Armor (4)	6
31	Valk, Dwarf Vampire Ftr7	9
	Acid-Spraying Chest Trap (1)	2
36	Bathica, Human Vampire Wiz7/Lor2	11
37	Talon, Hellcat (1)	7
39	Animated Suits of Armor (4)	6
	Glyphs of Warding (4)	3 ea.
40	Shadows (7)	9
	Bathica, Human Vampire Wiz7/Lor2	+5
43	Large Gargoyles (4)	10
44	See area 39 above for details	–
46	Gulch, Male Ogre Ftr7 (1)	9
48	Shandrylla, Dark Naga Clr1 (1)	9
49	Human Vampire Spawn (3)	9
	Will-o'-Wisp (1)	
	Glyph of Warding Trap (1)	3
	Greater Glyph of Warding Trap (1)	6
50	Merrow (6)	7
	Large Fire Giant Skeletons (2)	2
	Lachlan, Human Vampire Wiz10	12

Even a *knock* spell won't open it. PCs can learn the command word after a careful search of Bathica's study (see area 37), as Bathica is the only member of the Heptad that Lachlan trusts (foolishly) to keep the knowledge secret.

The interior of the *fortress* consists of a single room that functions as a living area. Lachlan's iron coffin, which rests against one wall, is sealed with an *arcane lock* spell. Small holes in the lid allow Lachlan to enter and leave the coffin in *gaseous form*. The vampire keeps his **Treasure** inside the coffin.

Upon the coffin rests a *darkskull*, an evil magic item that enshrouds the *fortress* with an *unhallow* spell that bestows the following continuous effects:

- *Magic circle against good.* The benefits of this spell are imparted only to Lachlan and other allied (non-good) creatures inside the fortress.
- All turning checks to turn undead suffer a -4 profane penalty, and turning checks to rebuke undead gain a +4 profane bonus. Spell resistance does not apply to this effect.
- *Deeper darkness*, affecting only living creatures. *Light, continual flame,* and *daylight* spells are instantly snuffed by the *deeper darkness.*

Creature (EL 12): Lachlan rarely leaves his *fortress*, preferring to fight foes on his own terms. He is willing to parley with the PCs (see **Tactics** below) if he feels he can't overcome them with his guardians and spells.

Lachlan: hp 61; see "The Heptad" sidebar for statistics.

Tactics: Lachlan despises Valdemar (for reasons explained in "The Heptad" sidebar). Thus, Lachlan views the PCs' arrival as the perfect opportunity to eliminate Valdemar and usurp his leadership role. If the PCs allow Lachlan a chance to parley, he attempts to strike a deal, offering information (details on the castle layout, traps, secret doors, and so forth) plus a *bead of force* if the PCs destroy Valdemar. If they succeed, Lachlan agrees to free the prisoners and leave Briarwood in peace. Of course, Lachlan doesn't plan to honor the bargain. He has no intention of freeing his prisoners or leaving Caer Morrow.

At the first sign of trouble, Lachlan casts *stoneskin, blur,* and *protection from arrows* on himself. If reduced to half hit points, he assumes *gaseous form* and flees to join the other members of the Heptad.

Note that the water in the cavern is not running and does not hamper vampires. Lachlan uses his *ring of water walking* to cross the cavern when not in *gaseous form.*

Treasure: Lachlan stores his personal wealth in a *bag of holding* (Type 1) inside his iron coffin. The *bag* contains 320 pp, six opals (worth 1,000 gp each), and a small cherrywood case holding three *+1 darts of returning.*

Concluding the Adventure

The PCs should take advantage of the daylight and destroy as many vampires as possible before sundown. Once the sun sets, the vampires have free reign over the castle and its grounds. If the PCs flee, pursuit is swift. Valdemar, Raven, Haroun, and Bathica assume alternate forms (dire bats or dire wolves), followed closely by Lythia on her nightmare and Valk astride his gorgon. Lachlan remains behind at the castle.

If the PCs fail to destroy the entire Heptad, the consequences depend on which ones survive. Valdemar and Raven punish Briarwood, leading a force of vampire spawn to wipe out the village. If Haroun survives, he uses *insect plague* to maximum effect while creating minor undead to terrorize the

townsfolk. Lythia and Bathica have no interest in the PCs or Briarwood. If the Heptad is destroyed, Lythia is content to flee to a large city to establish a thieves' guild. Bathica attempts to flee with as many of her books and as much of her alchemical equipment as possible. She prefers to continue her scientific pursuits, but she could easily resurface in your campaign.

If Lachlan survives, his actions depend on Valdemar's fate. If Valdemar survived, Lachlan stays behind at the castle and leaves Briarwood's destruction in Valdemar's hands. If Valdemar is wounded, he might attempt to finish him off, but only if he can do so from a safe distance. If Valdemar is destroyed, Lachlan takes charge of the Heptad and fortifies his hold over Caer Morrow and Briarwood. If the PCs present too great a threat to his plans, he and the surviving members of the Heptad flee Caer Morrow, taking whatever they can carry. Without Valdemar's strong leadership, Lythia eventually leaves the Heptad; the others, including Raven, remain.

If the PCs destroy Valdemar but Valk survives, the dwarf plots revenge. He begins by creating more vampire spawn, preferably fighters. Valk spends the next year preparing this unit for the inevitable confrontation with the PCs, equipping them with magic and masterwork items.

If the PCs destroy the entire Heptad, Briarwood is safe. The PCs can keep any magic items given to them by Franz Aldrich as well as loot plundered from Caer Morrow. Any remaining vampire spawn flee, and *charmed* villagers return to normal. Briarwood is grateful but can't afford to reward the PCs. Instead they throw a day-long festival in their honor. At the end of the festivities, assuming Lord Morrow's heirs aren't set free (see area **6b**), the PCs are granted the deed to Caer Morrow. Of course, any remaining hostile creatures (such as Nyssa) become their responsibility.

A gaming veteran of 19 years, Chris would like to dedicate this adventure to his first editor, Jean Rabe. Thanks to her guidance, encouragement, and kind words, she transformed an reluctant, inexperienced writer into a confident, professional author.

The Heptad

Detailed below are the seven members of the Heptad, a cadre of nocturnal hunters that prey on the village of Briarwood and other nearby settlements. For more information on vampires, consult the vampire template presented on pages 221-222 of the *Monster Manual*.

All members of the Heptad have the following Special Attacks: *domination*, energy drain (2 negative levels), blood drain, children of the night, and create spawn.

All members of the Heptad possess the following Special Qualities: damage reduction 15/+1, +4 turn resistance, cold and electricity resistance 20, *gaseous form, spider climb,* alternate form, fast healing 5.

Valdemar

Valdemar, Male Human Vampire Ftr10: CR 12; Medium-Size Undead (6 ft. 4 in. tall); HD 10d12; hp 89; Init +9 (+5 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 25 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, +6 *breastplate*); Atk +21/+16 melee (2d6+12/crit 17-20, *+2 keen greatsword*); or +18/+13 melee (1d6+8 and energy drain, slam); or +15/+10 ranged (no weapon); SA vampire (see above); SQ vampire (see above); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +10 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +5; Str 26, Dex 20, Con –, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 20.

Skills: Bluff +15, Climb +15, Handle Animal +14, Hide +15, Jump +14, Listen +15 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +15, Ride +15, Search +13, Sense Motive +11, Spot +15 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +15. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Expertise, Great Cleave, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus* (greatsword), Weapon Specialization* (greatsword).

* The Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization feats are already factored into Valdemar's combat statistics.

Possessions: +1 breastplate, +2 keen greatsword, wooden stake (see *Personality* below).

Description: Valdemar is powerfully built with short dark hair, a moustache, and goatee. He has a square face, strong chin, and a booming voice.

Personality: Valdemar is the master of Caer Morrow and uses fear to keep the other vampires in line. He stakes vampire spawn for insubordination, believing undeath is a gift he has the right to take away; thus he carries a wooden stake. An arrogant creature, he challenges enemies to take the stake and use it against him. He is meticulous and organized and closely allied with his former lover, Raven, and his dwarven henchman, Valk. He distrusts Lachlan and Lythia.

Raven

Raven, Female Human Vampire Rgr8: CR 10; Medium-Size Undead (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 8d12; hp 64; Init +11 (+7 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 27 (+7 Dex, +6 natural, +4 *leather armor*); Atk +16/+11 melee (1d8+8/crit 17-20, *+2 longsword* with Improved Critical feat); or +14/+9 melee (1d8+8/crit 17-20, *+2 longsword* with Improved Critical feat), +15/+10 (1d6+1/crit 19-20, *+1 short sword*); or +14/+9 melee (1d6+6 and energy drain, slam); or +17/+12 ranged (1d8+2 +1d6 cold damage/crit ×3, *+1 frost longbow* with *+1 arrow*); SA favored enemies, vampire (see above); SQ vampire (see above); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +11 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +6; Str 22, Dex 24, Con –, Int 15, Wis 18, Cha 21.

Skills: Animal Empathy +12, Bluff +12, Climb +13, Concentration +14, Handle Animal +12, Hide +29 (includes *+2 shadow leather armor*), Jump +11, Knowledge (nature) +12, Listen +15 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +18, Ride +11, Search +14, Sense Motive +13, Spot +16 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +9, Wilderness Lore +11. *Feats:* Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Track, Two-Weapon Fighting.

SA–Favored Enemies (Ex): Raven gets a +2 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks when using these skills against her first favored enemy: dragons. She also gets a +2 bonus to weapon damage against dragons. She

gets +1 bonuses (as above) against her second favored enemy: elementals.

SA—Children of the Night (Su): Raven's ability to call forth and command lesser creatures differs from other vampires. Instead of calling dire rats, bats, or wolves, she can call forth 10d10 ravens as a standard action. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve Raven for up to 1 hour.

Possessions: +2 shadow leather armor, +2 longsword, +1 short sword, +1 frost longbow, twelve *+1 arrows.*

Ranger Spells (2/1): 1st—*entangle, resist elements* (usually fire); 2nd—*speak with plants.*

Description: Raven has straight black hair with a blonde streak. She has a perfectly alabaster complexion with large, cold gray eyes and full blood-red lips. She wears tight black leather armor and keeps her weapons nearby at all times.

Personality: If she does not get her way, Raven is prone to fits of whining and complaining. She is vain and spends a significant amount of time perfecting her appearance. Raven lives for the hunt and takes great amusement in tracking sentient beings throughout the castle. She is closely allied with her former lover, Valdemar. She realizes that her brief marriage to Lachlan was a mistake, and the two rarely see "eye to eye." Although she suspects that Lachlan is plotting against Valdemar, she has chosen to keep her suspicions to herself, fearing that her intervention might shatter the Heptad.

Haroun

Haroun, Male Human Vampire Clrg (Nerull): CR 11; Medium-Size Undead (6 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 9d12; hp 80; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+3 Dex, +6 natural), 27 (+3 Dex, +6 natural, +8 masterwork full plate); Atk +13/+8/+13/+8 melee (1d8+9, *rod of flailing* with Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats); or +12/+7 melee (1d6+6 and energy drain, slam); or +9/+4 ranged (no weapon); SA vampire (see above); SQ vampire (see above); AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +8 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +12; Str 22, Dex 17, Con —, Int 19, Wis 22, Cha 18.

Possessions: Masterwork full plate (stored in area **19** during the day), *rod of flailing* (grants +4 deflection bonus to AC and +4 resistance bonus to saving throws for 10 minutes once/day; transforms into a *+3 dire flail* on command), divine scrolls *(animate object, creeping doom, summon monster VI),* holy symbol of Nerull (acts as *brooch of shielding,* absorbing 78 points of *magic missile* damage).

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +12, Heal +18, Hide +20, Knowledge (religion) +13, Listen +16 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +11, Scry +12, Search +12, Sense Motive +17, Spellcraft +16, Spot +16 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Ambidexterity, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Spells (6/6+1/6+1/4+1/3+1/2+1): 0—*detect magic* (×2), *inflict minor wounds, guidance* (×2), *resistance;* 1st—*cause fear*, command, cure light wounds, divine favor, entropic shield, obscuring mist, protection from good;* 2nd—*bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, darkness, death knell*, hold person* (×2), *spiritual weapon;* 3rd—*animate dead*, bestow curse, contagion, dispel magic, magic circle against good;* 4th—*confusion*, poison, sending, spell immunity;* 5th—*circle of doom, insect plague, slay living*.*

* Domain spells. *Domains:* Death (death touch 1/day; see page 163 of the *Player's Handbook* for details), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Description: Haroun has a husky build and shoulder-length black hair streaked with gray. Typically he wears his full plate armor or ceremonial garb. He has a wicked smile and cold, bloodshot eyes.

Personality: Haroun is withdrawn and pessimistic. After a decade of residing at Caer Morrow, he has become lazy, hedonistic, and overweight. Formerly a devout servant of Pelor, the sun god, he now worships Nerull, the god of death.

Lachlan

Lachlan, Male Human Vampire Wiz10: CR 12; Medium-Size Undead (5 ft. 5 in. tall); HD 10d12; hp 61; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (+4 Dex, +6 natural, +4 *bracers of armor*); Atk +9 melee (1d6+4 and energy drain, slam); or +5 ranged (no weapon); SA vampire (see above); SQ vampire (see above); AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +13 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 18, Dex 19, Con —, Int 22, Wis 18, Cha 16.

Skills: Alchemy +15, Bluff +7, Concentration +13, Hide +14, Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Rope Use +10, Scry +15, Search +16, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +19, Spot +12. Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Still Spell.

Spells (4/6/12*/4/4/3): 0—*mage hand, ray of frost* (×2), *read magic;* 1st—*burning hands, chill touch, expeditious retreat, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, silent image;* 2nd—*arcane lock, blur, ghoul touch, Melf's acid arrow* (×2), *protection from arrows, resist elements* (fire), *see invisibility* (×2), *spectral hand* (×2), *summon swarm;* 3rd—*dispel magic, gust of wind, haste, lightning bolt;* 4th—*arcane eye, lesser geas, minor globe of invulnerability, stoneskin;* 5th—*feeblemind, Mordenkainen's faithful hound.*

* Thanks to his *ring of wizardry II,* Lachlan can cast double the number of 2nd-level spells per day.

Possessions: +4 bracers of armor, ring of wizardry II, ring of water walking, two *beads of force,* potions (*bull's strength, haste, inflict serious wounds*), arcane scroll (*improved invisibility*), spellbook (contains all of Lachlan's prepared spells plus *detect magic, flare, bull's strength, darkness, invisibility, fog cloud, shatter, web,* and *improved invisibility*).

Description: Lachlan is a short, stooped individual with a bald head. He wears a voluminous black robe.

Personality: Lachlan is bitter and hateful, with no real friends and countless rivals. He was drawn to the Dawn Crusaders by his secret love for Raven, but by then she had already pledged her undying love to Valdemar. Resentful of Valdemar's good looks and charisma, Lachlan silently rejoiced when Valdemar was killed by the vampire-king Vasilis D'Noor. He took the bereaved Raven as his bride for a time, but the marriage didn't last, as Raven didn't truly love him. With Raven and Valdemar reunited in undeath, Lachlan sees little chance of winning Raven's love. He now spends most of his days scheming to overthrow Valdemar and seize control of the Heptad. Toward this end, he has made a secret alliance with Bathica and is trying to gently sway Haroun.

Bathica

Bathica, Female Human Vampire Wiz7/Lor2: CR 11; Medium-Size Undead (5 ft. 6 in. tall); HD 9d12; hp 57; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (+4 Dex, +6 natural), 24 (with *mage armor*); Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 and energy drain, slam); or +7 ranged (no weapon); SA secrets of inner strength (+1 to Will saves), vampire (see above); SQ lore, vampire (see above); AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +10 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +11 (includes secrets of inner strength); Str 18, Dex 18, Con –, Int 22, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills: Alchemy +17 (includes Skill Focus feat), Bluff +11, Concentration +10, Decipher Script +8, Gather Information +10, Hide +14, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (nature) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +13 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +14, Profession (alchemist) +11, Read Lips +8, Search +15, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +17, Spot +15 (includes Alertness feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Reflexes, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus–Alchemy, Skill Focus–Knowledge (the planes).

Spells (4/6/6/4/3/2): 0–*detect magic* (×2), *mage hand, read magic;* 1st–*chill touch, expeditious retreat, mage armor, message, summon monster I, unseen servant;* 2nd–*blur, protection from arrows, resist elements* (fire), *see invisibility, summon monster II, Tasha's uncontrollable hideous laughter;* 3rd–*dispel magic, nondetection, slow, summon monster III;* 4th–*arcane eye, fear, summon monster IV;* 5th–*cloudkill, wall of stone.*

Possessions: +2 cloak of resistance (already factored into saving throw bonuses above), *wand of dispel magic* (14 charges; command word "Beluthos"), arcane scrolls (*displacement, magic circle against good*), gold-rimmed spectacles (worth 50 gp), spellbook (contains all prepared spells plus *ray of frost, identify, minor image, arcane lock, shatter, haste, magic circle against good, solid fog, fabricate,* and *permanency*), key to chest in area 40.

Description: Bathica is a disheveled, puffy-faced woman in wrinkled robes. She has unkempt, wavy brown hair and gold-rimmed spectacles.

Personality: Bathica views undeath as an opportunity to continue her research for eternity. She spends her time concocting vile potions or learning arcane lore. As such, she ignores her physical appearance, considering it unimportant. She is withdrawn and absent-minded, lacking common sense. Valdemar spurned her once, so she allies with Lachlan.

Valk

Valk, Male Dwarf Vampire Ftr7: CR 9; Medium-Size Undead (4 ft. 3 in. tall); HD 7d12; hp 63; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 15 ft.; AC 26 (+4 Dex, +6 natural, +6 magic chain shirt); Atk +16/+11 melee (1d8+10/crit ×3, *+2 battleaxe of throwing*); +13/+8 melee (1d6+6 and energy drain, slam); or +15 ranged (1d8+10/crit ×3, *+2 battleaxe of throwing*); SA vampire (see above); SQ dwarf, vampire (see above); AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +9 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +3; Str 22, Dex 20, Con –, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Possessions: +2 chain shirt, +2 battleaxe of throwing, helmet with demon-faced visor, key to chest in area 31, four 100-gp gems in a pouch.

Skills: Bluff +10, Climb +16, Disable Device +10, Handle Animal +14, Hide +13, Listen +9, Move Silently +13, Ride +17, Search +10, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9. *Feats:* Alertness, Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus* (battleaxe), Weapon Specialization* (battleaxe).

* Valk's Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization feats are already included in his combat statistics.

Description: Valk is a solidly built dwarf with white wispy hair, although he is balding on top. As a curse of his undeath, not a single whisker grows on his face. In battle, he wears a helm with a demonic visor to hide his beardless face.

Personality: Valk is content to be a follower. He is loyal to Valdemar and has trouble making decisions on his own. He is no more than a soldier, albeit an excellent one. Valdemar has placed Valk in charge of the castle's defense; as a result, the castle's defense isn't nearly as organized as it could be.

Immortality bores him, so Valk spends his time polishing his battleaxe, honing his combat prowess, feeding his pet gorgon (see area 5), and planning simple defense strategies. He fears spiders and is thus wary of Lythia. He is loyal only to Valdemar and Raven and does not trust any of the other Heptad members.

Lythia

Lythia, Female Drow Vampire Rog7: CR 9; Medium-Size Undead (5 ft. 1 in. tall); HD 7d12; hp 50; Init +11 (+7 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 26 (+7 Dex, +6 natural, +3 *ring of protection*); Atk +10 melee (1d6+5 and energy drain, slam); or +11 melee (1d6+1/crit 19-20, *+1 keen sickle*); or +14 ranged (1d4+2 and poison/crit 19-20, *+2 hand crossbow*); SA sneak attack +4d6, poison, spell-like abilities, vampire (see above); SQ evasion, uncanny dodge, darkvision 120 ft., light blindness, vampire (see above); SR 18; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +14 (includes Lightning Reflexes feat), Will +4 (+6 against spells and spell-like abilities); Str 20, Dex 25, Con –, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 21.

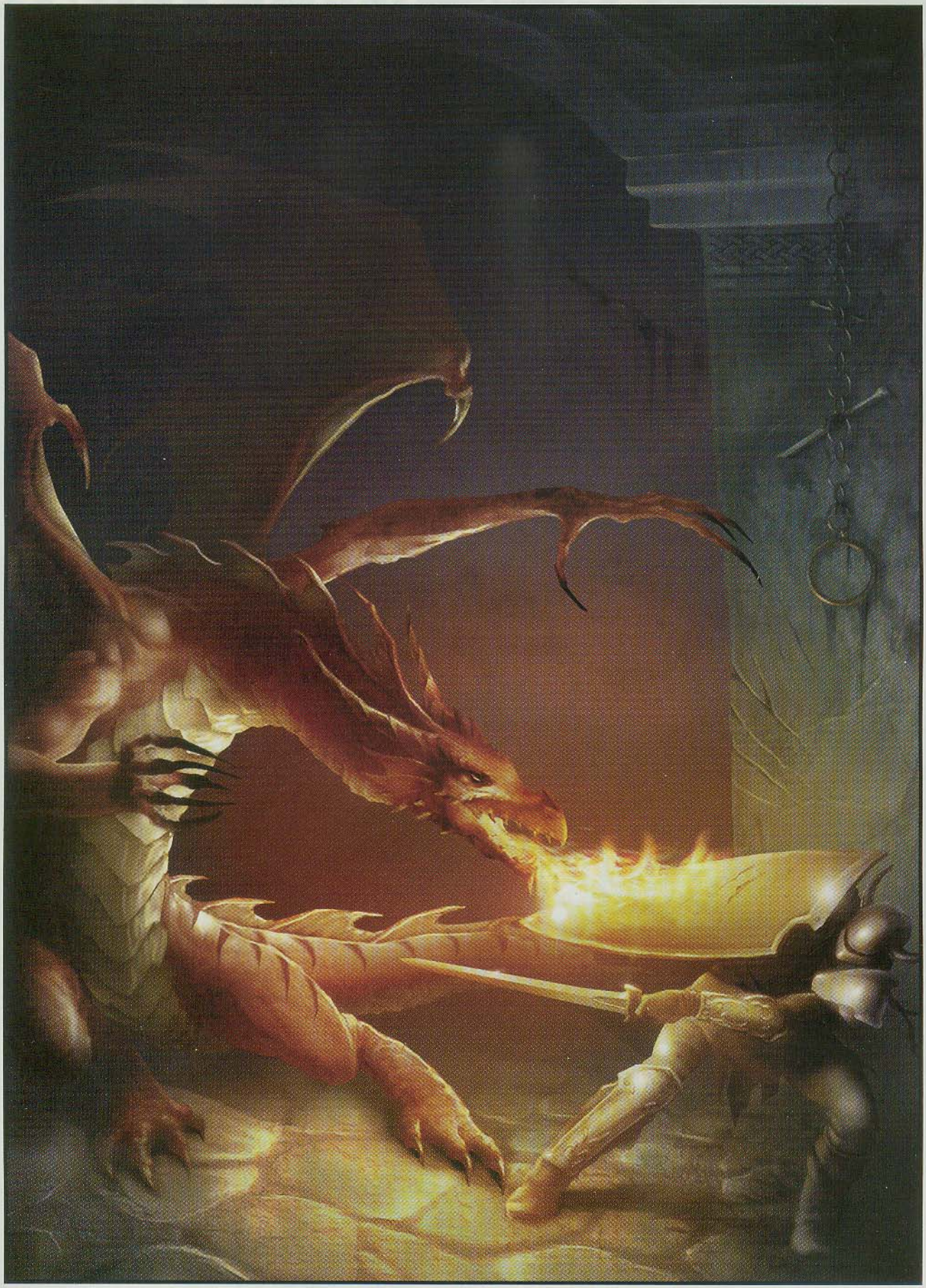
Skills: Appraise +8, Balance +11, Bluff +15, Climb +11, Disable Device +11, Disguise +9, Escape Artist +15, Hide +21, Listen +18 (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +23, Open Lock +13, Pick Pocket +13, Ride +11, Search +14, Sense Motive +10, Spot +18 (includes Alertness feat), Tumble +15, Use Magical Device +13. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quick Draw.

SA–Spell-like Abilities (Sp): 1/day, cast as Sor7–*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire.*

Possessions: +3 ring of protection, boots of speed, +1 keen sickle, +2 hand crossbow, 12 crossbow bolts, 6 vials of poison (DC 17; initial unconsciousness for 1 minute, secondary unconsciousness for 2d4 hours), *wand of polymorph other* (5 charges; command word "Scarildna").

Description: Lythia is a short, whip-thin dark elf with cat-like movements. Her white hair is cut short, and her pale lips are often twisted in a smug grin.

Personality: Lythia is a free spirit who abhors rules. She acts on a whim, and she especially enjoys climbing the caldera walls and invigorating rides on her nightmares. She has little interest in the other vampires' schemes and machinations but enjoys the gifts and attention she receives. Ω



Dungeon of the Fire Opal

Plunder at Your Own Risk

by Jonathan Tweet

artwork by Jason A. Engle • cartography by Todd Gamble

"Dungeon of the Fire Opal" is a dungeon-based D&D adventure designed for a party of four 3rd-level characters. Player characters (PCs) who survive most of the adventure should advance to 4th level. You can modify the adventure for stronger or weaker parties by increasing or decreasing the number of monsters in the dungeon or by giving them more or less effective tactics. However, doing so alters the challenge-to-treasure ratio. Remember that changing the total number of monsters also changes the total number of experience points (XP) available for a given party. See the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for specific suggestions on how to adapt the adventure for groups of varying sizes and different levels.

Magic Items · Monsters · Non-Player Characters (NPCs) · Objects · Settlements · Traps

Adventure Background

Somewhere under the ruins of a monastery is a fire opal carved into the likeness of a fist. This stone was the symbol of the Order of the Opal Fist and waits as a reward to the brave and clever.

About 140 years ago, a group of monks founded the remote Fire Opal Monastery. They kept to themselves, with very little presence in the surrounding lands. Unknown to most, the monks were in league with creatures of Hell.

Twenty years ago, the evil monk Endigon was corrupted by a harpy cleric from the Abyss (the chaotic evil lower planes). As a result, Endigon became chaotic. He forged a deal with some local gnolls to betray his own monastery to them. As he planned it, he would steal the fire opal—hidden in the subterranean chambers—while the gnolls made off with the monastery's more accessible treasures. The harpy gave him secret Abyssal riddles to use against the lawful monks, and he was familiar enough with the monastery's defenses to circumvent them.

A veritable army of gnolls razed the monastery aboveground while Endigon ventured below with Grandil, an elite gnoll. Grandil, however, turned on Endigon and killed him, vowing not to leave the monastery until he had claimed the fire opal as his own. Grandil, in turn, died within sight of the secret door that led to the treasury where the fire opal still waits.

Grandil returned as a ghost, and he still lurks in the abbot's chambers where he was killed. Meanwhile, seven monks trapped in a secret chamber resorted to cannibalism, damning themselves to become ghouls once they inevitably died of starvation.

Now, years later, an osyluth has the duty of *teleporting without error* from one Hell-allied group on the Prime Material plane to another. It serves as a threat, a show of power, an advisor, and an enforcer. When, on its regularly scheduled rounds, it *teleported* to the secret catacombs of the fallen monastery, it found that the monastery had been destroyed. It explored the secret half of the catacombs. First, it released the trapped ghouls. Then it gathered all the corpses it could find, and (with the help of an erinyes, who desecrated the area) *animated* them into skeletons and zombies. It set these undead to guard the catacombs. Finally, it gathered the various portable valuables it could, such as the monks' magic rings or weapons, and *teleported* away with them (to trade them to other fiends across the Prime).

Still bound by its oath to protect the monastery, the osyluth returns for a few hours every month. At any given time, there's about a 1-in-100 chance that it's wandering (invisible) through the chambers. (You can ignore the chance that this powerful monster shows up, roll for it, or simply have it show up "by coincidence," as you please.)

The underground chambers are divided into two sections. The northern section (areas 1-23) is easily accessible from the surface, but the southern section (areas 24-41) can only be accessed through a secret door in area 3. The gnolls looted the northern half, but those few that Endigon let into the southern half were killed. For twenty years, outlaws, monsters, wild animals, and lunatics have made their home in the northern half, making it pretty much a typical dungeon. The southern half, where the fire opal is hidden, hasn't been explored since the gnolls attacked.

A year ago, four adventurers explored a few rooms of the dungeon but retreated after being attacked by ghouls (see the "Example of Play" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 130).

The latest inhabitants of the northern half of the dungeon are a loose coalition of unsavory folks: a tiefling wizard, two imps working with her, a fiendish red wyrmling with whom the imps are trying to forge an alliance, and lizardfolk that are

Scaling the Adventure

This adventure is designed for a party of four 3rd-level PCs. However, modifying the adventure for groups of different size and level requires a few modifications:

1st- to 2nd-level PCs

Run the adventure as written, but be aware that the PCs will need to rest and heal more frequently, possibly leaving the dungeon several times. Consider splitting the imps (area 21) into two separate EL 2 encounters, taking away Skazzyg's *ice storm* scroll, and taking away Grandil's malevolence ability.

4th-level PCs

Increase the strength and/or number of foes. Some examples are given below:

- Add one ghoul to both areas 4 and 25, increasing the EL of each encounter by 1.
- Give the osyluth skeletons and zombies (areas 10B, 28, and 40) an extra attack with their scorpionlike tails. A tail has the same attack bonus as a claw and deals 3d4 points of damage plus the creature's Strength bonus. Do not increase the EL, but award +20% XP for these encounters.
- Make the fiendish red wyrmling (area 15) a very young fiendish red dragon (Large Dragon; HD 10d12+40; AC 18 (-1 size, +9 natural); +14 attack bonus; SA smite good for +10 damage; breath weapon deals 4d10 points of fire damage [DC 18]; SQ cold resistance 15, damage reduction 5/+2; SR 20; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 12), turning it into an EL 5 encounter.
- Make Skazzyg (area 23) a 4th-level conjurer (+1 point of Constitution, 1d4+2 extra hp, +1 bonus to attacks and Will saves, one more 1st- and 2nd-level spell per day, 5 extra skill points), turning her into an EL 5 encounter.
- Make Grandil (area 28) a 2nd-level fighter (+1d12 hp, +1 bonus to attacks and Fortitude saves, 1 bonus feat, 1 extra skill point), turning him into an EL 5 encounter.

5th-level PCs

- Make the monstrous spiders in area 3 one size category bigger (Large), making the encounter EL 5.
- Add one ghast leader to the ghoul packs in areas 4 and 25, increasing the EL of each encounter by 2.
- Change the fiendish red wyrmling (area 15) into a young fiendish red dragon (Large Dragon; HD 13d12+52; AC 21 (-1 size, +12 natural); +19 attack bonus; SA smite good for +13 damage; breath weapon deals 6d10 points of fire damage [DC 19]; SQ cold resistance 20, damage reduction 10/+3; SR 25; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +9; Str 24, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 12), turning it into an EL 6 encounter.
- Make Skazzyg (area 23) a 5th-level conjurer (+1 point of Constitution, 2d4+4 extra hp, the Brew Potion feat, two 3rd-level spells per day, 10 extra skill points). Oskullo, her bat familiar, gets a +1 bonus to its natural armor and a +1 bonus to its Intelligence score and gains the ability to speak with Skazzyg. Give Skazzyg two potions (*blur, invisibility*). These changes make her an EL 6 encounter.
- Make Grandil (area 28) a 3rd-level fighter (+2d12, +2 bonus to attacks, +1 bonus to Reflex and Will saves, 2 bonus feats, 2 extra skill points), turning him into an EL 6 encounter.

tending to the dragon for the imps. Various unrelated creatures and features are also found in the northern section of the dungeon.

The ghost of Grandil, still intent on claiming the fire opal, lurks in the southern half of the dungeon, along with the dead and undead remnants of the monks and gnolls who died there.

Adventure Synopsis

The characters have a chance to explore the ruins, learn more about what's in the dungeon, find their way into the secret area to the south, and eventually find the fire opal.

The players are going to try to piece together the mystery of what happened in the monastery. Be generous when they try to decipher clues. There are few mysteries that give the PCs any big advantage if they're solved, so you're not giving anything away to let PCs put the pieces together.

One challenge is going to be finding the secret door that leads to the southern half of the dungeon. In some sense, that's no trick at all. The corpse of Abbot Hollowstrike lies in area 2, and a *speak with dead* spell cast on the corpse might reveal more about the monastery and its layout. A *speak with dead* scroll costs a mere 375 gp. If the PCs haul the abbot's corpse to a friendly 5th-level cleric, they can get the spell cast for 150 gp. They can also use the *speak with dead* scroll in area 11.

If the characters don't hit on this stratagem, there are other ways they can find out about the secret door. They can purchase the map that Tordek, Mialee, Jozan, and Lidda found (as detailed in the "Example of Play" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). One of the ghouls in area 5 can flee the combat and try to get back to the secret door (though it will likely become trapped in the spider web that's recently been woven across the corridor leading to area 3). Ghouls from area 25 can come wandering out through the secret door in search of food. Skazzyg's notes (see area 23) might refer to the secret door, or even just to the unusual features of the ceremonial room, motivating PCs to investigate the room more thoroughly.

Another important piece of information is that there's a ghost in the southern half of the ruins (the ghost of Grandil the gnoll). This particular ghost can possess characters, and that's a potentially deadly power. If the PCs stumble unprepared and at partial strength into an encounter with the ghost, they could all die. Giving the PCs some warning before they face the ghost can make the difference between life and death.

Adventure Hooks

Use one of these hooks to involve the PCs in the adventure, or feel free to invent your own.

- The adventurers have heard of a valuable jewel, a fire opal, hidden in the ruins of the Monastery of the Opal Fist. They come to look for it.
- For 100 gp, the characters buy a map (the one found a year earlier by Mialee, Tordek, Jozan, and Lidda) that shows part of the dungeon, including hidden rooms. They hope to use it to find the fire opal.
- A monk in the party is assigned by her sensei to travel to the ruined monastery and discover what she can about the monks' downfall (see area 18).
- A fiendish red wyrmling (area 15) has been devouring cattle and setting farmsteads on fire. The local authorities place a bounty on its head (1,000 gp), and the characters track it back to the dungeon.

❯ A local temple to Fharlanghn has been looted of two relics: a mirror and statue (see area 20). The temple's head cleric (Jikk Hardwalk, LG female halfling Clr2) offers a reward to anyone who returns the items: 300 gp worth of clerical goods (holy water, clerical potions, divine scrolls, *continual flame* stones, and so forth). A trustworthy group that swears to undertake the mission with diligence can get 100 gp worth of clerical goods in advance. The cleric doesn't have any helpful spells. She's too inexperienced, for example, to cast *imbue with spell ability* on anyone.

❯ The queen has been usurped by a blackguard, and the PCs are part of the insurgency resisting his rule. The local insurgents need a safe place as a headquarters, and they ask the PCs to "pacify" the dungeon under the monastery for them to use. (The characters might clear the north half without ever finding the secret passage to the southern chambers. After the rebels set up, ghouls come through the secret door in area 3 and attack.)

Rumors

The PCs might learn a few rumors of the monastery and its inhabitants by asking questions of people living in the nearby settlement. PCs investigating the monastery can make a Gather Information skill check, with the result determining what they learn. A bard who succeeds at a Bardic Knowledge check or a monk who succeeds at an Intelligence check can learn the rumors as well.

DC 15 Rumors

❯ A red dragon the size of a horse has been spotted in the area, preying on the local wildlife and razing farmsteads near the monastery ruins. (True.)

❯ Catlike predators with tentacles sprouting from their backs (displacer beasts) have been seen prowling the ruins of the monastery. (False.)

❯ The last group of adventurers who explored the dungeon beneath the monastery encountered monstrous spiders and undead horrors. (True.)

DC 20 Rumors

❯ The monks who built the monastery were known as the Order of the Opal Fist. (True.)

❯ The monks were evil and conspired with agents from the lower planes. (True.)

❯ The monks were presumed destroyed years ago when the monastery was besieged by humanoids. (True.)

❯ The monks were led by an Abbot who, before his death, opened a gate to Hell below the fallen monastery. (False.)

DC 25 Rumors

❯ A secret door in the dungeon leads to hidden catacombs that have yet to be explored. (True.)

❯ The monks were betrayed by one of their own, but the traitor was slain for his folly. His restless spirit continues to haunt the catacombs. (The last statement is false.)

❯ The monks hid a symbol of their power—a magnificent gemstone—beyond a secret door in the dungeon. (True.)

❯ Several months ago, a mysterious wizard appeared and started asking questions about the monastery and the dungeon underneath it. She wore a hooded cloak and kept her features well hidden, and she had a bat for a familiar. (True.)

Stones and timbers
Fell and burned.
But the secret stone
Is yet unturned.

—local children's song, referring to the fall of the monastery

Monastery of the Opal Fist

Above the dungeon, in the middle of an old forest, lie the ruins of the monastery. The ruins consist of paving stones, building stones, low walls, and a few trees breaking through here and there. In the middle of this field is a dark hole with stone steps in it. They are 10 feet wide and lead underground to area 1.

Dungeon Features

Bas-Reliefs: The monks decorated their underground rooms with bas-reliefs depicting monks in study and contemplation. In the northern rooms, most of these reliefs are badly defaced, while they are in perfect condition in the south.

Continual Flames: The monks lit their underground chambers with *continual flames* that sprang from stones protruding from the ceiling. The northern half of the dungeon no longer has these *continual flames,* as some protruding stones have been broken and the other *continual flames* have been *dispelled* by a darkmantle that lived in the dungeon several years

Random Encounters

Wandering monsters appear only in the northern section (areas 1-23). You can roll for wandering monsters when the PCs enter a high-traffic area, when they spend a long time in one place, when they've made a lot of noise (such as a battle), or when you feel like it. (Think twice before rolling for wandering monsters when the characters are leaving the dungeon. An unexpected encounter when the PCs are weakened enough to retreat can be deadly.) If the PCs kill or drive off a monster and roll that encounter again, treat the result as "no encounter" instead.

d%	Wandering Creature(s)
01	1d2 dire bats, looking for food or shelter.
02	2d4 goblins* and 1d2 worgs. The goblins are lawful explorers and might parley.
03	Insane hobgoblin driven mad by the allip in area 8, now disoriented and defenseless.
04	1d6+3 1st-level dwarf warriors* exploring.
05	Phantom fungus (see area 2).
06	Fiendish red wyrmling (see area 15) prowling the dungeon in search of food.
07	Imp (see area 21) wandering around invisibly.
08	Skazzyg, the tiefling wizard (see area 23), investigating while invisible.
09	Oskullo, Skazzyg's bat familiar (area 23).
10	1d3+1 ghouls (see area 25), prowling.
11-100	No encounter.

* These creatures are 80% likely to have a 6th-level treasure, as detailed on page 170 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (Chapter 7: Rewards).

ago. The southern half of the dungeon, however, is completely lit by *continual flames*. (With a great deal of effort, a stonecutter or mason would be able to remove the *continual flame* stones from the ceilings and move them elsewhere.)

Dead Ends: The southern half of the dungeon has numerous dead ends. These are defensive elements, meant to lead intruders astray.

Floors: The floors in the northern rooms have lots of litter on them: bugs, rats, animal remains, weird dungeon fungi, shards of empty potion vials, occasional spikes or daggers, spent crossbow bolts and longbow arrows, chips of stone knocked off bas-reliefs, spoor from wandering beasts, bones of dubious origin, and so forth. "Empty" rooms and corridors aren't barren or sterile, merely empty of all but this random litter. The floors in the southern rooms have the signs of battle, such as empty potion vials and spent arrows, but none of the dungeon ecosystem.

Doors: Most doors are good wooden doors. Hallway doors always open into rooms, and doors that join two rooms always open into the larger room.

Good Wooden Doors: 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break (DC 16, 18 if locked); Open Lock (DC 25).

Secret Doors: Secret doors are hidden from both sides and require Search skill checks (DC 20) to detect. Unless otherwise noted, secret doors swing open on hidden hinges, like doors and can either be pushed or pulled open.

Secret Stone Doors: 4 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 25; Break (DC 28); Search (DC 20).

1. Empty Entry Chamber.

This damp chamber has an arched, vaulted ceiling 20 feet high in the center. The walls are masonry (cut stone blocks), the floor rough flagstones. Tattered webs dangle from the center of the ceiling, and that part of the ceiling is marked with soot.

On the floor in the middle of the room (marked **A**) is a pile of husks, skin, bones, spider castings, and filth. It's been kicked around because adventurers and the imps (see area **21**) have searched through it.

In the southwest corner (marked **B**) are ashes and organic junk—the remains of rotting, molding grain sacks (including yellow mold) that the fiendish red wyrmling (see area **15**) flamed with its breath.

PCs who explore the western hallway and make a successful Listen skill check (DC 10) hear the sound of rushing water coming through the ajar door to area **2** (marked **C**).

Creatures: Since this chamber is a high-traffic area, you can roll for wandering monsters. If you want the creatures associated with Skazzyg the evil wizard (area **23**) to present a united defense against adventurers, a guard might be posted here: an invisible imp (area **21**), Skazzyg herself (invisible), or her bat familiar. In any case, the guard tries to escape notice and return to its allies with news of the characters' arrival.

2. Abbot Hollowstrike's Remains. The door to this room is a great, heavy thing with a huge ring of corroded bronze in the center. The door stands ajar and has swollen just enough to no longer fit into the doorframe.

A fast-flowing stream, 3 to 5 feet deep, enters this rough-hewn chamber through a 2-foot-wide northern inlet and exits to the south in the same manner. Toward the south, it forms a pool some 4 feet deep at its edge and about 7 feet deep at the center. The pool is home to a group of blind white fish, and you can see a few white crayfish crawling among the rocks on the bottom.

Eight rotting barrels stand against the east wall, left from when the room was used to gather water for the monastery. A few buckets also lie scattered about.

Lying at the bottom of the pool is the limed-over skeleton of Abbot Hollowstrike. Without a successful Spot check (DC 15), this appears to be just an unusual mineral formation. In its bony fingers, the skeleton still holds a special key that allows the secret door in area **28** to open to the treasury (area **29**).

Creature (EL 3): An invisible phantom fungus lurks here, waiting for a likely meal to wander by. The creature's hit points are above average, but its Dexterity is lower than average.

Phantom Fungus (1): CR 3; Medium-Size Plant (4 ft. tall); HD 2d8+6; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 13 (-1 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +3 melee (1d6+3, bite); SQ plant, natural invisibility; AL N; SV Fort +6, Ref -1, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 9, Con 16, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills: Move Silently +4.

Tactics: The fungus waits until someone happens to wander near it, and then it attacks. Have it strike a random character (or one who's ventured away from the rest of the party) at an opportune time. It moves around as it fights, generally taking a 5-foot step after each attack. This instinctive strategy makes it hard for enemies to find it.

Development: Abbot Hollowstrike can respond to *speak with dead* spells; his mouth is skeletal but intact. Unless the caster is lawful evil (as the abbot was), the corpse gets a Will saving throw at +8 to resist. (The abbot was an 8th-level human monk.)

For creepy effect, have the abbot speak in present tense, as if he's still alive, saying things like "Endigon has betrayed us to the gnolls, but the Monastery of the Opal Fist will never fall." If the PCs are gaining "too much" information from the abbot, his limed-over, bony jaw falls apart with the strain of moving, letting you stop the interrogation.

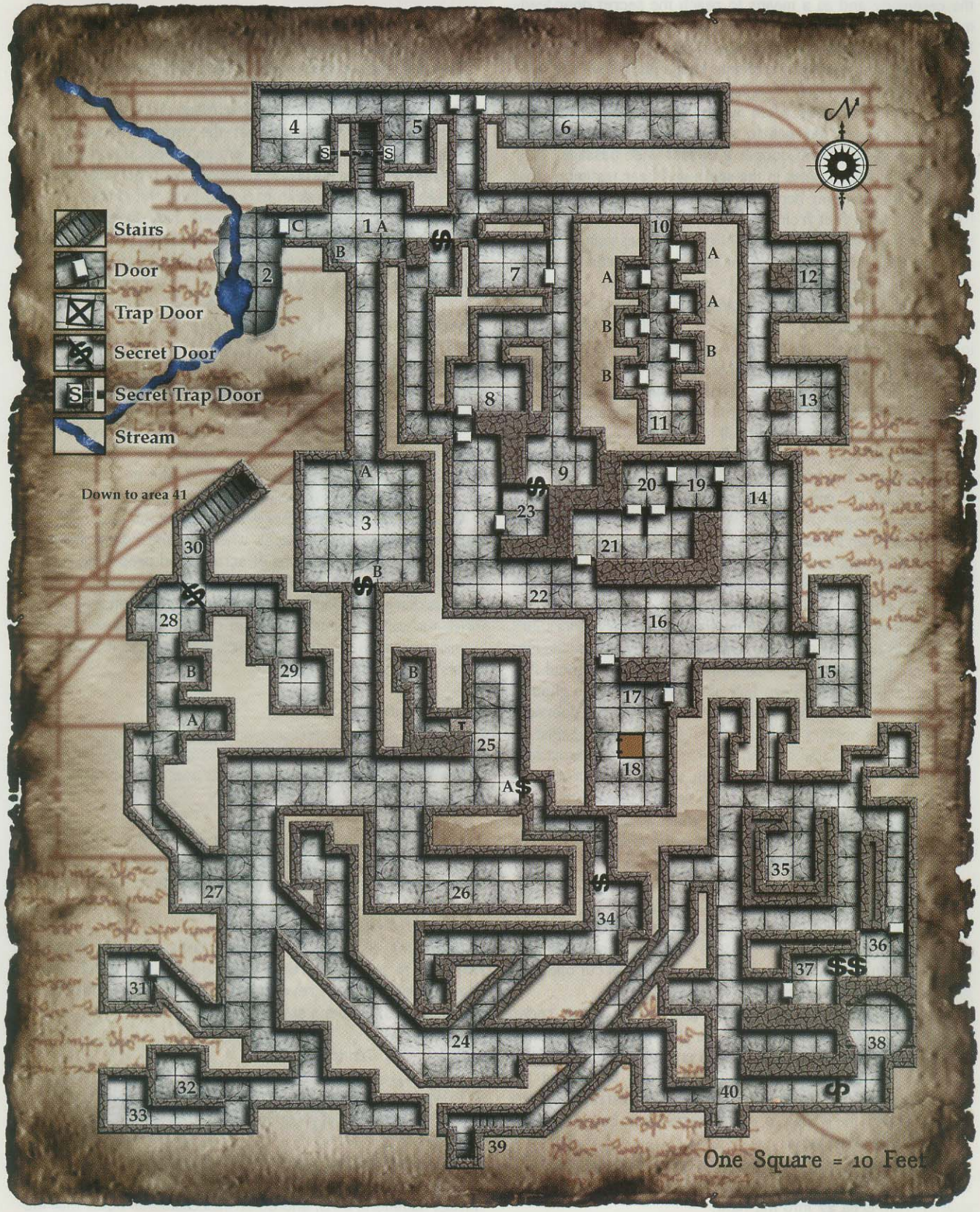
Before he died, the abbot learned that one of his monks, Endigon, had betrayed the monastery to the gnolls. While the fighting was too furious for him to know exactly what happened, he knew that Endigon had lowered the monastery's defenses to let the gnolls in. He also knows the following:

- The Order of the Opal Fist was allied with the forces of Baator, the lawful evil lower plane.
- One can reach the monastery's secret treasury through a secret door in the ceremonial chamber (area **3**).
- The fire opal—a large gem symbolizing the monastery's eternal legacy—is hidden in the secret treasury. (The Abbot declines to reveal what magical powers, if any, the gem might possess, referring to it only as a "relic of the Order.")

3. Ceremonial Room. The doorway leading to this room (marked **A**) is rigged with a **Trap**, detailed below.

This large, square room appears to be a dead end. Its arched, domed ceiling reaches a height of 25 feet in the center.

Dungeon of the Fire Opal



The monks brought the faithful here after death, consecrated each corpse, and then carried it to its final resting place in the secret southern chambers. A wooden platform placed against the south wall served as both a dais upon which to hold the ceremony and as a means to reach the secret door leading into the southern crypts and secret chambers. The platform rose 9 feet off the ground, with the bottom of the secret door being 1 foot above that. Some knobs just above the level of the vanished platform look like mere bumps in the wall, but one of them (marked B), when pushed in, causes a 10-foot-by-10-foot portion of the wall to swing inward with a grinding noise. Behind the secret door is a 10-foot-wide passage.

Only four socket holes in the south wall bear testimony that the platform was ever here. Two are parallel to each other, 10 feet apart and 3 feet from the floor. The other two are 3 feet higher up and directly above the first two. These square holes are 6 inches wide and about 6 inches deep. One still has a few wooden splinters in it.

Trap (EL 1): Two monstrous spiders have spun a web across the doorway (marked A). The first PC (or PCs) in the marching order automatically blunder into the web and become entangled if they fail a Spot skill check (DC 20). An entangled PC can't move, suffering a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity until freed. An entangled character who attempts to cast a spell must make a Concentration skill check (DC 15) or lose the spell. Disturbing the web attracts the attention of the spiders (see **Creatures** below).

A webbed PC gets a +5 circumstance bonus on Escape Artist and Strength checks to free herself if she's standing on the floor and can leverage against it. Each 5-foot section of the web has 6 hp and damage reduction 5/fire.

Spider Web: CR 1; entanglement (see above); Escape Artist (DC 20); Break (DC 26).

Creatures (EL 3): Two Medium-size monstrous spiders lurk on the walls near the doorway, waiting for prey to stumble into their web. In addition, the spiders have captured a ghoul that ventured from the southern half of the dungeon. The ghoul is thoroughly cocooned and hangs 10 feet above the doorway. Immune to the spiders' poison, it struggles futilely against its bonds. The web cocoon is opaque, which means PCs must tear it open to see who or what is caught within. The cocoon can withstand 12 points of damage or can be torn open with a successful Strength skill check (DC 26). While wrapped in the web cocoon, the ghoul is treated as *held* (as the *hold person* spell).

Medium-Size Monstrous Spiders (2): hp 14, 9; *Monster Manual* 210 (vermin).

Ghoul (1): hp 16; *Monster Manual* 97.

Tactics: If the PCs disturb the web trap, both spiders rush out to bite them. They prefer to web Small characters (if they can) and then poison the webbed prey. If the PCs cut open the ghoul's web, it immediately tries to attack.

Development: If the PCs make a lot of noise in this room, they might attract the attention of the ghouls in area 25. If they open the secret door, it makes a loud enough grinding noise to alert the ghouls. The ghouls try to move into position at the end of the 70-foot-long secret corridor. The distance and the corner grants the ghouls a +10 circumstance bonus to their Move Silently skill checks.

If you wish to make the adventure more challenging, a fight with the ghouls from area 25 could also bring the skeleton guards from area 27 into the fight.

4. Way of the Ghouls.

Except for the bugs, mold, and fungi that thrive in damp dungeons like this one, the room is empty.

Actually, two ghouls lurk in a secret tunnel that opens into this room and the adjacent chamber (area 5).

Creatures (EL 2): These two ghouls came from the southern half of the dungeon.

Ghouls (2): hp 13, 14; *Monster Manual* 97.

Tactics: When the ghouls hear the shrieker (see area 5), they open the trapdoor in this room and sneak up on the PCs if they can. With the shrieking going off, it's practically impossible (+20 DC to Listen skill checks) to hear the ghouls.

Treasure: In their tunnel, the ghouls hide treasures from previous kills: simple weapons, a 30-foot-long rope, 270 gp, and three scrolls (*spider climb, Melf's acid arrow, magic circle against good*).

5. Shrieker.

A 4-foot-tall purplish fungus leans against the north wall of this litter-strewn but otherwise empty chamber.

The ghouls in area 4 have propped up a shrieker here, hoping to use it as an alarm. It leans against the wall near the entrance, so anyone who comes through the doorway sets it off. The sound is like insane bagpiping.

Creature (EL 1): A shrieker leans against the wall near the entrance, wailing like bagpipes when anyone comes through the doorway. Shabby lengths of scrap wood prop it up.

Shrieker (1): hp 6; *Monster Manual* 93 (fungus).

Development: In addition to alerting the ghouls in area 4, the shrieker's wail warrants a Random Encounters check. Though harmless itself, the shrieker is worth XP because it makes the ghouls' attack more dangerous.

6. Ruined Larder.

This long, narrow room is filled with ruined wooden shelving, shattered earthenware jugs, and various colonies of molds and fungi.

Junk fills the room. Once this was a full larder, with jugs of wine, sacks of grain, shelves stocked with vegetables, and dried human flesh (for special meals). The gnolls trashed it, and later inhabitants have thoroughly searched it. The molds and fungi are colorful but harmless.

Searching through all the junk takes about 5 minutes. Taking 20 to search the room takes 100 minutes. A successful Search check (DC 15) reveals old humanoid bones that have been cut by a butcher's saw.

7. Redspotted Centipede.

A 16-foot long centipede with red spots along its length coils on a floor littered with wooden and metal clutter.

Scattered around the floor of this room are splintered shelves and the ruined remains of common tools: hoes, spades, chisels, hammers, awls, and other miscellaneous items that the

monastery needed to be self-supporting. This room was simply a storage room for such tools.

Obscene and semi-literate messages are written in Goblin on the wall by the door. This graffiti was left by a gang of goblins that camped here years ago. The words are scrawled in charcoal and are hard to read (but legible). Messages include "Goblins rule!" and "All hale Maglubiyet!"

A dead redspotted centipede lies in a corner. There used to be two centipedes in the room, and one of the imps closed the door on them, shutting them in. Now there's only one.

Creature (EL 1 1/2): The redspotted centipede has 3 Hit Dice instead of 2. At your discretion, the redspotted centipede can represent a distinct species or just be a Large monstrous centipede with an extra Hit Die.

Large Monstrous Redspotted Centipede (1): CR 1 1/2*; Large Vermin (16 ft. long); HD 3d8-3; hp 12; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 12 (-1 size, +3 natural); Atk +3 melee (1d3+2 and poison, bite); Face 10 ft. × 5 ft.; SA poison; SQ vermin, darkvision 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 8, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 3.

Skills: Climb +10, Hide -1, Spot +7.

SA—Poison: Bite—DC 16; initial and secondary damage 1d4 points of temporary Dexterity.

SQ—Vermin: Immune to mind-influencing effects.

* This centipede has 1 more Hit Die than the typical Large monstrous centipede, so award +50% XP.

Tactics: The centipede prefers to attack one creature until that creature drops. It then retreats and waits for the other creatures to leave so it can claim its meal. If PCs pursue it, it fights back. If they take the "meal" away, it pursues them.

Variant Rule: Experience for Avoiding Encounters

Characters who are looking intently for the fire opal might just shut the door on the redspotted centipede rather than waste time fighting it. If the players feel a conflict between playing smart as adventurers (avoiding pointless battles) and playing smart as game characters (killing big bugs for XP), reward them for playing smart as adventurers. Give them 1/2 XP for intelligently avoiding incidental encounters, and give them the other half when they find the fire opal.

8. Haunted Meditation Room.

From around the corner, you hear quiet babbling—a human-like voice whose words are too soft for you to understand.

An allip haunts this room. If the characters sneak up on it, it is sitting in the middle of the room meditating before a 4-foot-tall icon of Hextor carved into the far wall. If the allip notices the PCs coming, it advances and probably comes down the hall at them.

A monk's skeleton, unmolested by rats and other dungeon scavengers, lies crumpled in the corner. The skull and other bones are quite splintered.

On the south wall is a bas-relief of the fist of Hextor: six barbed arrows held in a black gauntlet. The monks would meditate here while gazing upon this icon.

The monk, Brother Honderlo, was meditating on the truth of the law when he was struck down. Endigon, in preparing to betray the monastery, interrupted the monk and posed to him a problem, "What directs us to obey Law?" The question raises a paradox in the mind of any lawful character who meditates on it. (Thinking about it is harmless. Thinking is so sloppy and imperfect that it cannot conceive the paradox accurately.) The paradox arises, roughly speaking, because there are two possible answers. Either it is a Law that directs one to obey the Law, in which case the question can be repeated ad infinitum, or something other than a Law directs one to obey the Law, in which case the Law is based on something lawless. This paradox trapped Brother Honderlo in recursive meditation, and when the gnolls came he sat there helplessly as they chopped open his head with their axes.

Creature (EL 3): The allip looks like a translucent, black-robed monk with horribly twisted features. It is meditating noisily, stewing on the paradox. The allip's babble goes something like this: "Obey it. Nothing the Law can smashing my head slippery. 'The gnolls carry the Law,' says Endigon. The other than direct one authority of Law, against the Law. Follow the Law. Endigon, your riddle is, but Law cannot. Obey Law directs you..."

Allip (1): hp 28; *Monster Manual* 16.

Tactics: If the allip hears the characters or sees their lights playing on the walls outside its room, it comes to attack. It strikes first at PCs that aren't fascinated by its babbling. It moves as though it is punching the characters (which it thinks it is). Fascinated characters are entitled to a new Will saving throw (DC 16) every round that they see the allip attacking a party member; success negates the fascination effect. PCs who successfully save cannot be affected by the allip's babble for one day.

Development: A PC who understands what the allip is babbling about might be able to liberate it by resolving the paradox (if the paradox even has a solution). If a PC declares a plausible solution to the paradox, the allip shrieks and disappears, liberated from its madness. If a PC declares a less satisfactory solution but one that at least represents some understanding of the problem, the allip engages the PC in a largely coherent philosophical discussion. (If the PC's ears are stopped, this doesn't work.) If the PC engages in the discussion, she needs to make a Will saving throw against the allip's babble (even if she's already made such a save within the last 24 hours). If she succeeds, the allip stops all it's doing to ponder her words (and does not defend itself if attacked). If she fails, she is driven insane (as the *insanity* spell).

The PCs might have a way to cast *speak with dead* on the corpse. Brother Honderlo was a lawful neutral 4th-level human monk with a +6 Will saving throw modifier. He knows about the secret door in the ceremonial room (area 3), but not what lies beyond it. He knows that the monastery had forged an alliance with devils. He knows nothing about the fall of the monastery, as Endigon posed the riddle to him before the assault began.

9. Broken Clockwork Bladeswinger.

Standing in the middle of the room is an giant iron and wood structure that has been bent and smashed.

Exploring humanoids have already picked through the rubbish here. All that's left is scrap. Once it was a complicated, dwarf-made machine powered by massive weights suspended

from the ceiling and connected to the clockwork mechanisms by chains. The stationary machine would spin and lurch, swinging blades and projecting spearpoints unpredictably. Monks trained here, learning to dodge and block.

The wall has bas-reliefs depicting monks dodging arrows and rays from a beholder's eyes. One section of the relief hides a latch that opens the secret door in the south wall. The door swings into area 23, where Skazzyg lives. Skazzyg knows about the secret door and uses it for an escape, if she must.

10. Hall of Osyluth Skeletons.

The corridor is 10 feet wide and littered with jumbled refuse. Lining the walls are six doors, three per side.

This corridor contains the remains of a mighty battle between invading gnolls and the undead monstrosities that guard the room at the end of the hall. Some of these remains are the corpses of gnolls, picked apart long ago. Their axes lie near them—rusted, rotted, and worthless. Among the gnoll corpses are large, strange bones with arcane marks cut into them.

The clutter makes it tricky to maneuver in the hall, imposing a -2 penalty on Move Silently and Tumble skill checks.

The doors are large and wooden, with no handles on the outside. They have no lock or latch, and some hang slightly ajar. They're heavy, and the hinges are rusty, but they swing in with little effort.

The strange bones are osyluth bones, specifically the bones of three osyluth skeletons that the gnolls destroyed before they fell. Among the bones are three large, chitinous scorpionlike tails. The words cut into the bones are messages in Infernal: phrases such as "Obey thy master," "Kill the warm things," and "Praise to Asmodeus." (Asmodeus is the Arch-prince of the baatezu.)

10A. Vacant Cells. These three cells once held osyluth skeletons, but they were destroyed in the fall of the monastery. Carved into the far wall of each room is a bas-relief depicting a monk kneeling before an erinyes. Carved below the relief in Infernal are the words "Thanks to our friends below for this gift." (The osyluth skeletons were gifts from Hell, brought to the monks by an erinyes.)

10B. Occupied Cells. Each of these three cells contains the undead, *animated* skeleton of an osyluth. Created in Hell, these skeletons have +2 turn resistance. Bas-reliefs similar to those found in area 10A adorn the far wall of each cell.

Creatures (EL 3): Each cell holds a skeletal osyluth (Large skeletons) that attacks anyone who opens the door or enters the room at the end of the hallway (area 11).

Osyluth Skeletons (3): CR 1*; Large Undead (9 ft. tall); HD 2d12; hp 18, 14, 16; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft.; AC 13 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural); Atk +2/+2 melee (1d6+2 [x2], claws); Reach 10 ft.; SQ undead, immunities, turn resistance +2; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

* Award +10% XP for each skeleton because it's harder to turn than a normal Large skeleton.

Tactics: If the skeletons hear or see intruders, they immediately attack. (Have them make a Listen skill check opposed by the PCs' Move Silently skill checks. Due to the door and the distance to the corridor, PCs get a +6 circumstance bonus to their Move Silently checks.) The skeletons attack mindlessly and never maneuver to gain or avoid a flank attack.

11. Magical Storeroom.

The walls of this room have numerous shelflike niches cut into them. The shelves appear bare.

Monks kept their magic potions and supplies here. They emptied their store in defense of the monastery. On the floor lies an old ceramic vial with its wax-coated cork lying nearby. (This once contained a healing potion that a monk drank.)

One of the shelves conceals a secret compartment that requires a successful Search skill check (DC 17) to locate.

Treasure: One of the shelves pulls out to reveal a hidden compartment containing a *potion of blur* and a divine scroll with two spells (*cure light wounds* and *speak with dead*), each cast at 5th level. The stone in front of the compartment is less than 1 foot thick, so *detect magic* reveals the presence of the potion and scroll.

12. Empty Training Room.

This open chamber contains bas-reliefs depicting two monks fighting back-to-back against knightly figures on one side and berserker figures on the other.

This former training room is empty.

13. Empty Training Room.

This open chamber contains bas-reliefs depicting two monks fighting and flanking a dog-headed figure.

This former training room is empty. The dog-headed figure is a hound archon (celestial).

14. Gathering Hall.

The walls of this spacious and otherwise empty chamber has numerous bas-reliefs depicting monks standing in lines.

The monks depicted in the bas-reliefs are important monks from the monastery's history.

Creature: The fiendish red wyrmling from area 15 might be here. Put the dragon where you like, or roll d%: 01-30, area 14; 31-70, area 15; 71-100, area 16. The dragon is likely to be here if the PCs have made enough noise to draw it here.

Tactics: If the wyrmling notices the PCs approaching this room or area 16, it hides behind the corner. When the PCs get near, it moves around the corner (a 5-foot step) and breathes fire on them. This dragon can be a tough challenge, especially if the PCs don't have magic weapons. If you're feeling generous, the inexperienced, reckless wyrmling charges at the PCs as soon as it notices them rather than hiding and trying to set up a surprise attack.

Development: The imps from area 21 and the wizard from area 23 might help the dragon, or at least come out to see what the commotion is (but stay out of the fray, if possible).

15. Dragon's Lair. The door to this room appears scorched by fire, but it remains intact. The latch is broken, however, so it can't be locked (or even firmly shut).

A strange burnt smell mixed with a thick, bestial odor hangs in the air. The south wall is dirty and stained, and the floor near that wall is thick with litter.

This was a council room, with low wooden stools for chairs. A bas-relief along the south wall depict an erinyes devil sitting in council with monks. The wyrmling sleeps nestled against the southern wall, leaving molted scales and waste there.

Creature (EL 4): The dragon is a red wyrmling from the Abyss. It was called to this world and now lives here, acting much as any other red wyrmling would. Two lizardfolk (see area 17) tend it, and it is slowly coming to have true affection for them. The dragon speaks Infernal and Draconic.

Fiendish Red Wyrmling (1): CR 4; Medium-Size Dragon (Fire); HD 7d12+28; hp 67; Init +4 (Improved Initiative); Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 17 (+7 natural); Atk +10 melee (1d8+3, bite), +5/+5 melee (1d6+1 [×2], claws), +5/+5 melee (1d4+1 [×2], wing slams); SA breath weapon, *smite good;* SQ blindsight 30 ft.; cold resistance 10; fire, sleep, and paralysis immunity; damage reduction 5/+1; darkvision 100 ft.; keen senses; low-light vision; SR 14; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +4, Jump +10, Listen +11, Search +10, Sense Motive +5, Spot +11. *Feats:* Improved Initiative, Flyby Attack.

SA—Breath Weapon (Su): 30-ft. cone of fire; 2d10 points of damage; DC 17. Use once every 1d4 rounds.

SA—Smite Good (Su): Usable 1/day; +7 damage to a good-aligned creature with one attack.

SQ—Keen Senses (Ex): See twice as well as a human in light and four times as well in low light.

Tactics: The wyrmling is confident but not stupid. It attacks ferociously but flies away if sorely wounded. It might try to ambush adventurers in area 14.

16. Gathering Hall. Like area 14, this hall has bas-reliefs depicting lines of monks. The fiendish red wyrmling might ambush PCs here if they come through area 22.

17. Den of the Lizardfolk. The doors to this room are locked.

The walls of this room are adorned with bas-reliefs depicting elves, orcs, and horrible froglike bipeds in chains.

The froglike bipeds depicted in the bas-reliefs are slaadi. Currently two lizardfolk live here, with sleeping mats, traveling sacks, food, and so forth.

Creatures (EL 3): Two lizardfolk, a druid and her mate, live here with the druid's lizard companion. They tend the dragon and attempt to befriend it on behalf of the imps (who speak to the lizardfolk in Draconic). The lizardfolk are mercenaries; they are not evil and will parley with the PCs (see **Tactics** below).

Vaasta, Male Lizardfolk (1): CR 1*; Medium-Size Humanoid (Aquatic, Reptilian) (7 ft. tall); HD 2d8+4; hp 15; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (-1 Dex, +5 natural, +5 breastplate); Atk +5 melee (1d12+4/crit ×3, masterwork greataxe); or +0 ranged (1d6+3, javelin); AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will -1; Str 17, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 4.

Skills: Jump +5, Swim +1, Wilderness Lore +0. *Feat:* Multiattack.

Possessions: Breastplate, masterwork greataxe, bone vial of antitoxin (2 doses).

* Grant +25% XP since Vaasta has better gear than normal.

Shengam, Female Lizardfolk Drd1: CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid (Aquatic, Reptilian) (7 ft. tall); HD 2d8+6 (Lizardfolk) plus 1d8+3 (Drd); hp 29; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (-2 Dex, +5 natural, +3 hide armor, +2 shield); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, masterwork sickle), or -1 ranged (1d4, sling); SQ spells, nature sense; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 7, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 13.

Skills: Animal Empathy +2, Spellcraft +2, Swim -5 (in armor), Wilderness Lore +9. *Feats:* Multiattack, Improved Initiative.

Spells (3/2): 0—*cure minor wounds* (×2), *detect magic;* 1st—*cure light wounds, endure elements.*

Possessions: Masterwork sickle, hide armor, large wooden shield, bone vials of antitoxin (×2), arcane scroll (*feather fall, shocking grasp, unseen servant*), iron key (opens the doors to this chamber).

Swamp Lizard (1): CR —; Small Animal (3 ft. long); HD 1d8+1; hp 4; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural); Atk +3 melee (1d6, bite); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Feat: Weapon Finesse (bite).

Tactics: If possible, the lizardfolk parley with intruders. They have no desire to fight other than to protect themselves. If the PCs make a commotion in area 14 or 16, the lizardfolk might investigate. If the PCs bang repeatedly on the door in an attempt to open it, the druid calls out "Who's there?" (first in Druidic and then Draconic). The lizardfolk demand to be left alone, but they are willing to strike a deal if the PCs seem powerful. They go so far as to offer gifts in return for safety (such as their arcane scroll, which they can't use anyway). If they betray the imps, they'll have to leave the dungeon to avoid their wrath.

18. Prison Pit.

In the middle of the floor is an oaken trapdoor 10 feet across. The latch has a metal bar that keeps the trapdoor from being opened from below.

The trapdoor is set with two iron pull-rings and is heavy, requiring a successful Strength check (DC 26) to open. (Up to three characters can use an "aid another" action to help open the door; see page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*.) The trapdoor opens onto a shaft 10 feet square and 30 feet deep. From each side of the shaft, near the opening at the top, hangs a chain. These chains end in manacles for hands and feet. Two of the manacles hold humanoid skeletons.

The monks manacled their captives and lowered them into this prison. They would pull them up when they needed to interrogate or sacrifice them. The two captives died of dehydration after the monastery fell.

Development: Should the PCs use *speak with dead* spells to communicate with the hanging corpses, these unfortunates prove to be lawful good monks who were captured twenty years ago while trying to determine whether the monastery was evil. If a PC monk has been sent here to learn about the monastery, these monks might be of her tradition or school.

19. Imps' Meeting Room. The east door is locked. The west door is unlocked.

This 20-foot by 20-foot room has a stool near the center and some fresh bones in one corner. The walls are covered with strange symbols and markings.

The imps (see area 21) use this room to meet with Skazzyg and the lizardfolk. The bones in the corner are pig bones (the remains of a snack). The symbols are Infernal glyphs, recognizable to any character who makes a successful Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (the planes) skill check (DC 10).

20. Imps' Treasure Room.

Several dark-stained wooden boxes are stacked in a large pile in this 20-foot by 20-foot room.

The imps (see area 21) keep their stolen treasure here.

Treasure: Forty almsboxes are stacked in this room. These are boxes that temples (and sometimes other establishments) maintain. People put coins into them (traditionally a copper piece) for distribution to the needy. The imps have stolen these almsboxes from far and wide, partly for the coins and partly just for the wickedness of it. The treasure totals 100 gp, mostly in copper pieces, but with dozens of silver pieces and even a few gold pieces thrown in.

In addition, the imps have absconded with a large, silvered mirror with a gilt frame (60 gp) and a 2-foot-tall, 20-lb. sandstone statue of Fharlanghn (200 gp).

Development: Noise in this room attracts the attention of the imps (see area 21).

If the PCs have any scruples, they'll try to return the almsboxes, mirror, and statue of Fharlanghn to the temples and shrines from which they were stolen, or at least turn the almsboxes over to someone who'll distribute them to the needy. If the characters return these goods, they get a reward of clerical goods worth up to the total value of the goods returned (and good karma, for whatever that's worth in your campaign).

21. Wicked Ones. The south door is locked.

The room looks like a strange workshop, with tools, wooden furniture, locks, and miscellaneous material strewn about.

Two imps live in this room. They have attempted to "set up shop" in the dungeon, so to speak, and so they've gathered workable and salvageable furniture, tools, and locks and have been trying to repair them. They haven't gotten terribly far, as it's boring work.

Creatures (EL 4): The imps are dedicated to winning over the fiendish red wyrmling. The natural animosity between the chaotic dragon and the lawful imps makes this tricky, so they're employing lizardfolk as a neutral go-between. Eventually, the imps hope that the dragon and Skazzyg (see area 23) will join forces and form a powerful team.

Imps (2): hp 19, 15; *Monster Manual* 48-50 (devil).

Tactics: This battle shouldn't be a straightforward fight. The imps are usually invisible, though they turn visible when they attack. They also regenerate. Thus, they're favored strategy is to sneak up on people, sting them with their poisonous tails, and then fly away. (If they're successful at sneaking, they can sting during the surprise round and then hope to win initiative and fly away before anyone can react.) Once they've regenerated from any damage that they've taken in an assault, they come back and try it again. Since the imps' wings make noise when they fly, they can only effectively sneak on foot.

Development: The imps might go to Skazzyg (see area 23) for help, or just to warn her of the intruders.

22. Hallway. The door leading to area 23 is locked but openable from the other side.

This wide, L-shaped hallway has bas-reliefs depicting abstract, geometric shapes.

The bas-reliefs, with their recurrent motifs and carefully delineated shapes, represent the ordered mind and the discipline within the monastery.

23. Wizard's Chamber. The west door is locked but opens easily from within.

This 20-foot-square chamber contains a comfortable cot, a writing stand, and clothes hanging on pegs. A faded mosaic of strange glyphs covers the floor.

This is Skazzyg's room, although originally the room was reserved for meetings between the monks and emissaries of the lower planes. The glyphs painted on the floor are Infernal runes signifying order and obedience.

Creatures (EL 4): Skazzyg, a lawful evil tiefling wizard, lives here with her bat familiar, Oskullo. Skazzyg works with the imps (area 21), hoping that they succeed in winning the fiendish wyrmling's friendship. In the meantime, she's been studying the dungeon. She speaks Common and Infernal. She has enough XP that she does not lose a level if Oskullo dies.

Skazzyg, Female Tiefling Wiz(Cjr)3: CR 4; Medium-Size Outsider (5 ft. 10 in. tall); HD 3d4+6; hp 16; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+3 Dex) or 17 (with *mage armor*); Atk +1 melee (1d6, quarterstaff); or +4 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA *darkness*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; fire, cold, and electricity resistance 5; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff +4, Concentration +7, Hide +4, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Spellcraft +9. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Scribe Scroll, Toughness.

SA—Darkness (Sp): Skazzyg can cast a *darkness* spell 1/day as a 3rd-level sorcerer.

Spells (4/4/3): 0—*detect magic, ray of frost, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*chill touch, color spray, mage armor, summon monster I;* 2nd—*invisibility, summon monster II, web.*

Possessions: +1 cloak of resistance (already factored into Skazzyg's saving throw modifiers, above), *wand of magic missile* (3rd-level caster; 39 charges left), *potion of cure moderate wounds*, scroll of *ice storm*, spellbook (see below).

Skazzyg's spellbook contains the following:

0—all wizard cantrips except Transmutation spells;

1st—*chill touch, color spray, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, grease, mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, summon monster I;*

2nd—*invisibility, summon monster II, web.*

Oskullo, Skazzyg's Bat Familiar: CR –; Diminutive Magical Beast (1-ft. wingspan); HD special; hp 8; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 18 (+4 size, +2 Dex, +2 natural); Atk none; Face 1 ft. × 1 ft.; Reach 0 ft.; SA touch; SQ blindsight, empathic link, improved evasion, share spells; AL LE; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha 4.

Skills: Listen +9*, Move Silently +4, Spot +9.*

SA–Touch: Oskullo can deliver touch attacks cast by Skazzyg (such as *chill touch*).

SQ–Blindsight (Ex): Bats can "see" by emitting high-frequency sounds, inaudible to most other creatures, that allow them to locate objects and creatures within 120 feet. A *silence* spell negates this and forces the bat to rely on its weak vision, which has a maximum range of 10 feet. Also, the bat loses its +4 bonus to Listen and Spot checks if its blindsight is negated.

Tactics: Skazzyg prefers to enter a fight with *mage armor* and *invisibility* cast. She *summons* an infernal wolf and an infernal dire rat to fight for her. Then she charges up her bat with *chill touch.* On the next round, Oskullo flies off to deliver the *chill touch* effect, and she attacks with her offensive spells. She uses her scroll of *ice storm* if the adventurers look dangerous. (She has to roll 7+ on 1d20+3 to read the scroll correctly.) Otherwise she prefers her *wand of magic missiles.* She uses her *color spray* if faced with multiple foes.

Skazzyg keeps her spellbook strapped to her side, so there's nothing in this dungeon that she's eager to die for. She's not too proud to split, and she knows how to work the secret doors in her own room and the one that exits near area 1.

Treasure: In addition to her gear, Skazzyg has notes that she's made of the dungeon. Many pages are sketches of bas-reliefs that the PCs have likely seen already. If there are any clues that the PCs haven't discovered yet and that you'd like to hand them, they can be in Skazzyg's notes. (She writes them in Common.)

Development: Skazzyg might sneak away invisibly and try to reach the imps for help. She's rightly unexcited at the prospect of taking any route that brings her near the dragon.

24-38. Secret Rooms. These chambers are illuminated by *continual flames.* The floors are littered with the remains of the fights that occurred here when Endigon betrayed the monastery. Scattered at random throughout these chambers are dried pools of blood, spent missiles (arrows, shuriken, and crossbow bolts), and chewed bones (gnawed on by the ghouls in area 25). There are no bodies here, however, as the corpses were *animated* by an osyluth after the monastery fell.

Many of the southern rooms are harmless, but they contain strange hints as to the weird practices of the monks. Fell free to summarize these rooms quickly and to be generous with hints and

information. These rooms build atmosphere, but don't let them slow down the adventure.

24. Crypt with Zombie Guardians.

Dry bones are neatly stacked along the south wall of this 20-foot-wide chamber. At one end is a stack of skulls. Next is a stack of arm bones, then stacks of ribs and backbones. Next are hip bones, then leg and foot bones. A few loose bones lie scattered across the stone floor. Bas-reliefs over the stacks of bones show monks in battle stances.

Standing in the middle of the chamber are five moldering zombies: three gnolls equipped with scale mail, shields, and battleaxes and a man and woman wearing tattered gray outfits. The largest gnoll zombie has a jagged black and white emblem painted on its shield, and one of the human zombies is horrifyingly gaunt.

The stacked bones are the remains of monks who died during the 120 years that the monastery was active. Most are human, but bones of other humanoids are here are well. Many bones bear wounds, such as skulls with fractures, cut ribs, and broken leg bones. Inscriptions etched below the bas-reliefs (in Common) dedicate each separate part of the monks' bodies to the monastery.

The monks had peculiar burial practices. While the monastery was in operation, the dead were stripped of their clothes (in area 25) and their flesh (in area 26). Then the bones were separated and stacked here. Since powerful monks would be raised from the dead if they died, most of these bones belonged to young monks who died before proving themselves.

Creatures (EL 4): Five zombies stand guard here. Two are gnolls that died while raiding the monastery. The gnoll zombie carrying the shield is Grandil, the gnoll champion whose ghost still haunts the dungeon (see area 28). The fourth zombie is Endigon, who betrayed the monastery. The fifth is a monk who perished in the monastery's prison cell (area 31) after the monastery fell. The monastery's allied osyluth *animated* them with the help of an erinyes, who *desecrated* the area (granting the undead +2 hp/Hit Die).

The gnoll zombies bear kama wounds. The second monk zombie has manacles on its wrists, but the chains to which they were attached have been sundered. This zombie (the woman) is particularly gaunt from having starved to death.

Gnoll Zombies (3): CR 1; Medium-Size Undead (7 1/2 ft. tall); HD 3d12+9 (includes Toughness feat); hp 34, 33, 26; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (-1 Dex, +2 natural, +4 scale mail, +2 shield); Atk +2 melee (1d8+1/crit ×3, battleaxe); or +2 melee (1d6+1, slam); SQ undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Scale mail, large wooden shield (Grandil carries a steel shield), battleaxe.

Human Monk Zombies (2): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Undead (5 to 6 ft. tall); HD 2d12+7 (includes Toughness feat); hp 19, 9; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (-1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, kama or slam); SQ undead, partial actions only; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref -1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 8, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Kama.

Tactics: The zombies charge intruders and fight mindlessly.

Development: If you want to make the adventure more challenging, these zombies can be standing in sight of the skeletons in area 27. If so, they join any battle that takes place there or follow the skeletons if they leave their station (such as to attack the adventurers). If the zombies are turned and flee, the osyluth zombies (see area 40) or Grandil's ghost (see area 35) can follow them back when they return.

25. First Funereal Chamber.

Old, rotted clothes and broken, wooden tables litter the floor of this long, narrow room. Bas-reliefs show monks stripping the clothes off a dead monk. One inscription, in Common, says, "We enter this world naked and leave it the same."

Another inscription adorns the wall above a 5-foot-wide passage leading west. It reads, in Common, "Boldly, we walk the path of the Opal Fist."

Three iron spikes stick into seams in the east wall. These spikes keep a secret door (marked A) from opening and also provide a obvious hint that there's a secret door there. Pulling free a spike requires a successful Strength check (DC 21); trying to force open the secret door while the spikes are in place requires a successful Strength check (DC 25 with one spike, DC 28 with two spikes, or DC 34 with three spikes).

There's nothing of value among the monks' clothing and the ruined wooden tables on which the dead were laid.

The narrow western corridor ends at a 10-foot-square room (marked B) containing the **Treasure** and **Trap** (see below).

Creatures (EL 4): Four ghouls live here. These are four of the seven monks who resorted to cannibalism when they were trapped (with some unfortunate companions) in the secret passage connecting this room and area 34.

Ghouls (4): hp 10, 13, 13, 18; *Monster Manual* 97.

Tactics: These ghouls try to paralyze intruders, then drag their paralyzed prey away from the fight to be devoured.

Trap (EL 3): The room at the end of the narrow corridor has a niche in its northern wall. In the niche rests a small fire opal on an old pillow. Anyone who disturbs the niche or the gem causes a stone block 5 feet wide, 10 feet thick, and 10 feet tall (marked T) to drop down into the entrance to the corridor, sealing it off. The block cannot be moved. Any PC standing underneath the block when it falls must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC 15) or be crushed for 10d6 points of damage. If the PC survives, she is thrust into the narrow corridor or the room outside (player's choice).

A PC can notice and disable the trap in the 10-foot-square room or at the entrance to the corridor. The trap also has a release mechanism: When the block falls, a stone in the west wall of area 25 slides out 3 inches. Anyone depressing the stone raises the block and causes the trap to reset.

The monks designed the trap to foil the *locate object* spell. Anyone who casts *locate object* near the entrance to the secret chambers and tries to find "a fire opal" is directed to this one, as it's closer than the actual fire opal (in area 29).

Falling Block Trap: CR 3; 5-ft. × 10-ft. × 10-ft. stone block seals off the end of the corridor, trapping the PCs inside; any PC underneath the block when it falls takes 10d6 points of damage, Reflex save (DC 15) negates; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 21).

Treasure: The fire opal in area **B** is worth a mere 100 gp.

Development: If you want to make the adventure more challenging, you could have the fight with the ghouls alert and attract the skeletal guardians in area **27**.

If the PCs are all trapped in area **B**, they could be sunk. PCs with picks or stone chisels can laboriously carve their way out through the block; this requires 288 total hours of work. (Thus, four characters with picks could cut through in 72 hours.) Unfortunately, once the block falls, the party has a number of hours of breathable air equal to 288 divided by the number of PCs present. Thus, if four PCs are trapped with only two tools to cut through the block, they would deplete their air supply long before carving through the 10-foot-thick stone block.

26. Second Funereal Chamber.

A faint chemical smell lingers here. At the far end of the 20-foot-wide room are low stone tubs or vats. Bas-reliefs on the north wall show corpses, while those on the south wall depict skeletons.

The stone vats are filled with weak, foul-smelling acid. The acid stings if it gets in the eyes, but it has lost its potency over the years and is no longer dangerous.

The monks brought the naked dead from area **25** to this chamber. Here they immersed the corpses in acid that, over the course of days, ate away the flesh, leaving clean bones.

Inscriptions written under the bas-reliefs say, in Common, "That which is weak passes away. That which is strong endures."

27. Skeletal Guardians.

A mixed crew of skeleton guards stands at the ready in this wide intersection of corridors.

This broad intersection is noteworthy only for its guardians.

Creatures (EL 3): The allied osyluth placed seven skeleton guardians at this intersection—the remains of gnolls and monks who died in the battle for the monastery. Created in a *desecrated* area, they each have +2 hp.

Gnoll Skeletons (4): CR 1/2; Medium-Size Undead (7 1/2 ft. tall); HD 1d12+2; hp 4, 14, 8, 3, 7; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +4 scale mail, +2 shield); Atk +0 melee (1d8/crit ×3, battleaxe); SQ undead, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Scale mail, large wooden shield, battleaxe.

Human Monk Skeletons (3): CR 1/3; Medium-Size Undead (5 to 6 ft. tall); HD 1d12+2; hp 5, 8, 7; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +0 melee (1d4 [×2], claws); SQ undead, immunities; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Tactics: The skeletons mindlessly attack intruders on sight.

Development: To make the adventure more challenging, have the skeletons approach if they hear fighting, such as with the ghouls (area **25**). Alternatively (or additionally), have the zombies (area **24**) join the battle if they see the skeletons fight (or leave their station to fight).

Variant Rule: Double Time Combat

When seven skeletons attack four 3rd-level PCs, it can be a slow fight. It takes a while for the characters to whittle the skeletons down, but the skeletons (with their low attack bonus) almost always miss. Here's what you can do to make this fight, and others like it, go faster: Once combat has bogged down and the players are a starting to get bored, stop the combat at the end of the round and tell the players you're going to use the "double time" rules. Quite simply, all damage is doubled (+100%). Think of it as fast forwarding through the combat. You'll get pretty much the same result in about half the time.

Playing a double-time combat increases the influence of chance, which hurts the side that's more likely to win (almost always the players). Use "double time" judiciously.

28. Abbot's Chamber.

The shattered remains of osyluth skeletons (once the abbot's guards) litter the corridor marked **A**. The lone remaining osyluth skeleton—the one that finished off Grandil—stands in the alcove marked **B**. The osyluth skeleton, detailed under **Creature #1** below, leaps out to attack anyone approaching the abbot's chamber.

This chamber contains undisturbed furniture: a cozy cot, a large chest, an enamel chamber pot, and empty weapon racks on the walls.

This room was the personal living quarters of the abbot. It is sparse, reflecting the abbot's disdain for worldly comforts.

The secret door in the northeast wall swings east, revealing the passage north to the stairs (area **30**) but blocking and hiding the eastern passage to the treasury (area **29**). Finding the secret door requires a successful Search skill check (DC 20).

Hidden behind a loose stone in the east wall is a special lock. Finding the lock requires a successful Search skill check (DC 20). The abbot's key (in area **2**) fits the lock and operates a noisy mechanism behind the wall. Bypassing the lock without the proper key requires a successful Open Lock skill check (DC 30). The hidden gears change the way the secret door opens, so that it swings north and reveals the passage to the treasury (area **29**).

If the characters don't have the key or a decent lockpicker, they can use a *knock* spell by release the door lock. (The same *knock* spell, however, won't also open the secret door.)

Creature #1 (EL 1): An osyluth skeleton, the last of the many that once guarded this corridor, stands in the alcove marked **B**. Created in Hell, this skeleton has +2 turn resistance.

Osyluth Skeleton (1): hp 14; see area **10B** for complete statistics. Award +10% XP for the skeleton because it's harder to turn than a normal skeleton.

Creature #2 (EL 4): The ghost of Grandil occupies the room. A virtual prisoner of this chamber, he is kept here by his undying desire to claim the fire opal (hidden in area **29**). Grandil appears as a translucent gnoll in scale armor with a battleaxe and a large steel shield. The shield bears a jagged black and white symbol, which the PCs should recognize if they fought the zombie guardians from area **24**.

Grandil remains ethereal until he senses the presence of intruders in the room. He tries to use his malevolence ability to possess a PC at the rear of the party's marching order.

Grandil, Male Gnoll Ghost Ftr1: CR 4; Medium-Size Undead (Incorporeal) (7 1/2 ft. tall); HD 3d12; hp 21; Init +0; Spd fly 30 ft. (perfect); AC 11 (+1 deflection); Atk +1 melee (1d4 touch, incorporeal touch); SA malevolence; SQ undead, incorporeal, rejuvenation, turn resistance +4; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 18, Dex 11, Con —, Int 5, Wis 9, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb -1, Listen +2, Spot +2.

Feats: Power Attack, Cleave.

SA—Corrupting Touch (Su): Grandil deals 1d4 points of damage with his incorporeal touch. Against ethereal opponents, his attack bonus and damage are +5 and 1d4+4 respectively.

SA—Malevolence (Su): While ethereal, Grandil can merge his body with a creature on the Prime Material Plane. This ability is similar to *magic jar* as cast by a 10th-level sorcerer, except that it does not require a receptacle. If the attack succeeds, Grandil's ethereal body vanishes into the opponent's body. The target can resist the attack with a successful Will saving throw (DC 16). A creature that successfully saves is immune to Grandil's malevolence for 1 day.

SQ—Manifestation (Su): As an ethereal creatures, Grandil cannot affect or be affected by anything in the material world. When he manifests, he becomes visible but remains incorporeal. He can strike with his touch attack (or with a ghost touch weapon). While manifesting, he remains on the Ethereal Plane but can be attacked by opponents on both the Material and Ethereal planes.

SQ—Incorporeal: Grandil can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, or magic, with a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source. He can pass through solid objects at will, and his own attacks pass through armor. He moves silently.

SQ—Rejuvenation (Su): Two to eight (2d4) days after being destroyed, Grandil might rejuvenate. He must succeed at a level check to do so (1d20+3, DC 16). If the fire opal is removed from area **29**, however, Grandil does not rejuvenate.

SQ—Undead: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

When Grandil possesses a body, his Initiative modifier equals the body's Dexterity modifier. He can fight with his base attack (+2) plus the body's Strength. If the body has a battleaxe, he can use his Weapon Focus feat (+1 bonus to attack rolls). If the body's Strength is 13+, Grandil can use his Power Attack and Cleave feats. His Fortitude saving throw modifier is the body's Constitution bonus +2. His Reflex save modifier equals the body's Dexterity bonus +2. His Will save modifier remains -1.

Tactics: The encounter with Grandil is something of a climax. Think about how you want to

run it. The straightforward tactic is that Grandil unmanifests and possesses a likely character. He then proclaims, "Only I shall have the fire opal!" and proceeds to attack the other PCs. Once his host body has been beaten down, he leaves it behind and attempts to possess another character. If his malevolence doesn't carry the day, he resorts to the corrupting touch. If the players don't know how to deal with a malevolent ghost, this can get nasty, and the whole group could get wiped out.

Another possible tactic is that Grandil is too overcome with excitement to be rational. Once he takes over a body, he yells, "At last, the fire opal shall be mine!" and opens the secret door (which opens to area 30, not area 29). At your discretion, he might know about area 29 (having walked through the wall as a ghost) but not know how to get there. If so, Grandil might offer to work with the PCs to reach the treasury, but he'll never share the fire opal. Alternatively, he might not know about the treasury and instead look for the fire opal in the cavern (area 41).

Fighting a Malevolent Ghost

The following rules and advice pertain to fighting a ghost that's possessing party members.

Turning: A ghost that's possessing a body can be turned normally. If turned, it abandons the body and flees ethereally. (Note that Grandil has +4 turn resistance.)

Spells: Mind-influencing spells (such as *hold person*) affect the ghost, not the body. Thus, they generally don't work. Physical spells, such as *ray of enfeeblement,* affect the body; they might work even if they wouldn't affect an undead creature (such as *poison*). Force effects, such as *magic missile*, affect the body even though they extend to the ethereal plane. *Cure light wounds* damages the ghost, making it lose hit points. Unfortunately, the ghost still has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source; if it ignores a *cure light wounds* spell, the spell affects the body instead. *Disrupt undead* affects the ghost directly (with the standard 50% chance for the ghost to ignore it).

Protection from evil (or from any other alignment) shuts down Grandil's malevolence but does not drive him out of a host body. It does prevent him from possessing the body of one so protected.

Subdual: PCs might try to subdue possessed colleagues. This tactic can make for a slow battle, as the attackers suffer -4 penalty to attack rolls when using their normal weapons in this way. Remind the players that as long as a character has taken some subdual damage, they can deal regular damage with little chance of actually killing the character. (The wounded character drops from subdual damage before dropping to negative hit points.) If a PC in the party tries to damage the ghost with *cure* spells, these spells will sometimes undo damage to the possessed body, so those two tactics don't work well together.

Disarming and Grappling: If the PCs gang up on a single possessed character, they should be able to render him harmless. In response, Grandil abandons the body, but the formerly possessed character is now ready to grapple whoever gets possessed next. Every time the characters force Grandil to possess a new body, that's another chance for a successful Will saving throw.

Development: If Grandil claims the fire opal while possessing a body, he fulfills his ghostly purpose. He goes on to his afterlife, leaving the gem behind. Thus, it is possible to "defeat" Grandil simply by letting him have the fire opal. (If you're nastier than that, Grandil instead gains permanent control over the host, killing the host's spirit, whose soul then departs.)

29. Treasury. This area consists of two connected 20-foot-square chambers. The northernmost room contains a **Trap**; the southernmost room holds the **Treasure**.

When the PCs reach the southernmost 20-foot-square room, read or paraphrase the following:

> The far wall of this 20-foot by 20-foot room is adorned with a bas-relief depicting a naked woman with feathery wings holding a gem in an outstretched hand. A 4-foot-tall pedestal draped with red cloth stands in the middle of the floor. On top of the cloth sits a large, opalescent gem carved in the shape of a clenched fist.

The bas-relief on the southernmost wall depicts an erinyes clutching the fire opal. The actual gem rests on the pedestal.

Trap (EL 3): Traced on the floor of the northern 20-foot-square chamber is a *glyph of warding* that emits a terrible sonic blast. Anyone living creature crossing the chamber and touching the floor triggers the *glyph.*

Glyph of Warding: CR 3; 20-ft × 20-ft. sonic blast (3d8); Reflex saving throw (DC 16) halves damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Treasure: The fire opal is worth 7,000 gp, though the PCs will have to travel to a city or metropolis to find a buyer who can meet that price.

Development: While the fire opal has no magic properties, it might have a "curse," at your discretion. Some evil creature might be sent to retrieve it from its new owners.

30. Stairs Down.

> Damp stone steps lead down into the darkness. A sconce on the wall at the top of the stairs holds a lit torch.

These stairs lead down to a cavern (area 41).

Treasure: Set into the sconce is an *everburning torch.*

31. Prison Cell. This strong wooden door has a bar on the outside, but the bar is up (not in place) and the door is ajar.

> Empty manacles are chained to the wall of this otherwise empty room. One set of manacles is missing, and the chains to which the set was attached are broken.

This was the monastery's prison. A backsliding monk was being held here when the monastery fell. She starved to death and then was turned into a zombie when the oathbound osyluth came through. See area 24.

32. Meditation Room (Strength).

> This bare room has bas-reliefs that depict oxen, giants, and monks performing feats of strength.

Monks meditated on strength in this room. The chamber is currently empty.

33. Meditation Room (Tyranny).

The bas-reliefs in this room depict slave lords, conquering devils, and a mighty monk standing over other monks in chains. A humanoid skeleton lies in the northeast corner.

Monks in this room meditated on the glory of tyranny. This room is haunted by the spectral remains of Sister Sycolumuth, an elf monk who died during the raid on the monastery. It is her skeleton that lies on the floor.

Creature (EL 3): An allip haunts this room. This monk met the same fate as the one in area 8.

Allip (1): hp 22; *Monster Manual* 16.

Development: Sister Sycolumuth was a 6th-level, lawful evil monk (Will save +7). If the PCs cast *speak with dead* on her remains, she can tell them where Abbot Hollowstrike's chamber is located (area 28). She does not know where the fire opal is hidden, however.

34. Storage Room. Tools and ceremonial robes clutter this room. The secret door in the north wall is slightly ajar. On the floor near it are loose iron spikes. The inside of the door is scratched with claw marks. The secret passage to area 25 contains the mostly eaten remains of two monks.

When the gnolls penetrated the monastery's defenses, nine monks took ambush positions in the secret passage, planning to spring on the intruders. Endigon knew about the passage, however, and he and his gnoll allies spiked the secret doors shut. Seven of the trapped monks eventually delayed starvation by devouring their two companions. When these seven finally succumbed themselves, they rose again as ghouls, but they were still trapped.

When the allied osyluth came by at last, it heard the ghouls clawing at the secret door, pulled the iron spikes out, and opened the secret door. It shouldn't be hard for the PCs to figure out that something had been trapped in the passage and that it was released by something outside.

The tools and robes were articles used by the monks in their funereal rites. For instance, the PCs find hooks for lowering corpses into the vats of acid in area 26.

35. Ceremony Room.

Hellish scenes of devils and monks dominate the bas-reliefs on all four walls of this chamber.

Here monks performed their communal, evil rituals.

36. Untouched Quarters.

The door into this room has a gaping hole hacked through it, but the room itself appears untouched. Through the hole, you see some simple furnishings draped in dust.

The west wall is concealed by a moldy tapestry depicting a blue dragon. A low stool, low writing table, inks, ink brushes, empty weapon rack, and futon complete the chamber's furnishings. Everything is covered with a thick layer of dust.

On the night of the battle, the monk who lived here used the secret door behind the tapestry to join forces with the monk in area 37. There he died. The gnolls punched a hole through the door, but they didn't bother to enter or search the room, which obviously had no valuables in it.

37. Battle Scene.

The door to this room is bashed in. Smashed furniture, broken weapons, and loose sheets of paper lie scattered about. Thick dust attests to the passage of time.

A powerful monk once claimed these quarters. He and his colleague (see area 36) battled several gnolls here. The two monks were killed, but they took down several gnolls before being overwhelmed. Their skeletons have since been removed, *animated*, and placed in area 27 as guards.

38. Altar To Wee Jas.

A hexagonal altar stands in the middle of this circular room. Painted on the top of the altar but obscured by dust is a strange symbol. The sides of the altar are adorned with carvings of daggers, one per side. The room is otherwise bare.

The altar is made of stone and dedicated to Wee Jas, the goddess of death and magic (LN). It radiates a constant *magic circle against chaos* that fills the chamber. A successful *dispel magic* cast directly upon the altar dispels the *magic circle against chaos* (which was cast at 12th level). Painted on the top of the altar is the symbol of Wee Jas (depicted on page 72 of the *Player's Handbook*).

The first time the altar is touched by a chaotic creature or defaced, a **Trap** is triggered.

The monks hid their devotion to Wee Jas from their devil allies. Abbot Hollowstrike believed that devoting the monastery entirely to evil would weaken it by making it too narrow. He and many colleagues meditated on the neutrality of death in this room to try to maintain spiritual balance.

Trap (EL see Creatures below): When the altar is touched by a chaotic creature or otherwise defamed, six nonmagical daggers magically appear in the carvings along the sides of the altar, leap into the air, and attack any living creatures in the room. They appear, leap forth, and attack in the same round.

Creatures (EL 3): Once animated, the daggers pursue living targets until destroyed. Although the daggers have only 1 hp each, their Hardness rating allows them to ignore the first 10 points of damage dealt by any attack.

The daggers are otherwise nonmagical and have tiny symbols of Wee Jas worked into their bronze-coated hilts.

Animated Daggers (6): CR 1/2; Tiny Construct; HD 1/2d10; hp 1 each; Init +2 (Dex); Spd fly 60 ft. (perfect); AC 14 (+2 size, +2 Dex); Atk +1 melee (1d4-1); Face 2 1/2 ft. × 2 1/2 ft.; Reach 0 ft.; SQ Hardness 10, construct; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -5; Str 8, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1.

SQ–Hardness (Ex): Each dagger has a Hardness of 10.

SQ–Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

39. Stairs Down.

The stairs descend to a narrow landing. The western wall of the landing is adorned with the bas-relief of a skull-faced devil with a scorpionlike tail.

This is where the oathbound osyluth arrives when it *teleports* to the dungeon. Written on the wall (in Infernal) is the phrase, "Come, valued ally." While on the Prime Material plane, the osyluth can hear that phrase if anyone speaks it aloud. It immediately uses its *teleport without error* ability to arrive at this point. It seeks to learn whatever it can about those who called it and seeks to expand the power of Hell on the Prime Material plane (by slaughtering reckless adventurers and turning them into zombies).

The wall with the osyluth bas-relief radiates magic (moderate Divination aura) but not evil (as there's nothing inherently evil about a spell that lets a creature hear a special, spoken phrase.)

Creature (EL 6): An encounter with the osyluth is likely to kill some or all of the party members. If the PCs have been smart up to this point but find themselves confronting the fiend, you might allow them some latitude in dealing with the creature. For instance, the osyluth might permit the PCs to leave the dungeon in exchange for the fire opal (if it's in their possession) or some other treasure of equal value. Negotiating with the devil should require some clever roleplaying or, at the very least, a successful Diplomacy check. If the PCs are belligerent or demanding in their dealings with the osyluth, it shows them no quarter!

Osyluth (1): hp 32; *Monster Manual* 48.

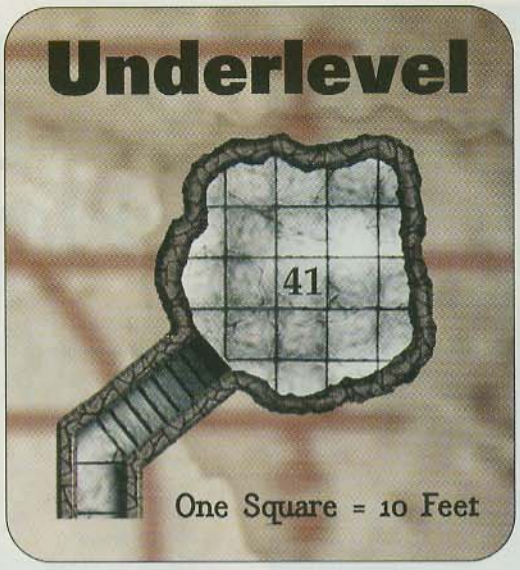
Development: If you wish to expand the adventure and add new levels to the Dungeon of the Fire Opal, this staircase can lead the PCs to these new levels. Otherwise, you can rule that the stairs end at a cave-in. In either case, whatever might be found at the bottom of the staircase is beyond the scope of this adventure.

40. Osyluth Zombies. These corridors were once traveled only by high-ranking monks. Osyluth zombies were placed on guard here to prevent others from walking the same path.

Creatures (EL 4): Four osyluth zombies stand in this intersection. These zombies pre-date the fall of the monastery and were damaged in the battle. (Each has 1 to 100% normal hit points.) Created in Hell, they have +2 turn resistance. (Their superior AC, inferior hp, and turn resistance balance out to make them CR 1 creatures.)

Osyluth Zombies (4): CR 1; Large Undead (9 ft. tall); HD 4d12+3 (includes Toughness feat); hp 18, 21, 10, 6; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +8 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d8+4, slam); Reach 10 ft.; SQ undead, partial actions only, turn resistance +2; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 8, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feat: Toughness.



41. Underlevel.

Rising naturally from the middle of this unlit cavern is a finger of worked stone. Atop this pedestal rests a gleaming orange gem shaped like a fist. Against the far wall of the cavern stand several barrels and crates.

This cavern served as Abbot Hollowstrike's personal redoubt. In the crates and barrels he kept a store of food, water, and lamp oil. He also placed a quartz facsimile of the fire opal (worth 1 gp) atop the stone pedestal, in case thieves found their way here looking for the true gem. A successful Appraise skill check (DC 15) reveals the actual value of the "fire opal" in this room.

Development: If you like, another set of stairs could lead from this room to expansive caverns or ancient dungeons. If so, then perhaps some creature from below has come up here and taken the fire opal from area 29. Now it's down below (in which case raise its value to 10,000 gp).

Concluding the Adventure

With the fire opal in their clutches, the PCs are free to leave the dungeon and sell their hard-earned treasure for equipment or magic items. If you intend to use this module as part of a larger campaign, here are a couple adventure hooks that might stem from the PCs' acquisition of the fire opal:

- The fire opal might have some magical power after all. It might be the key to a *gate*, perhaps leading to one of the outer planes, or it might be a magic prison for some powerful celestial being. Evil factions serving the fiends of Hell might attempt to steal it to keep the celestial imprisoned. If the PCs succeed in freeing the celestial, it offers them some reward (a minor magic item, perhaps) and asks for their aid in battling the fiends who trapped it. The celestial might know of some evil plot to enslave the local populace or ask the PCs to investigate rumors of a secret temple dedicated to some ancient evil god. (This would make an excellent bridge to the upcoming super-adventure *Return To the Temple of Elemental Evil*, particularly if the Monastery of the Opal Fist were located close to the town of Hommlet.)
- The fire opal might be the key to unlocking new levels of the dungeon under the Monastery of the Opal Fist. Perhaps the stairs in area 39 lead to a door can that be opened only with the fire opal. Beyond the door, PCs might unearth a secret temple dedicated to Asmodeus or a lost redoubt populated by monsters of the Underdark. Ω

Jonathan has been building dungeons since he was twelve (with several years off in the middle there while he dabbled in "real roleplaying"). He particularly likes random monster tables, which he used to stock dungeons twenty-three years ago and to stock the north half of the Dungeon of the Fire Opal. The difference is that this time he used tables he designed himself.

Encounter Level Chart

Summarized below are the Encounter Levels (ELs) for all of the encounters in "Dungeon of the Fire Opal":

Area	Encounter Description	EL
2	Phantom Fungus (1)	3
3	Spider Web Trap (1)	1
	Medium-Size Monstrous Spiders (2)	3
	Ghoul (1)	
4	Ghouls (2)	2
5	Shrieker (1)	1
7	Large Redspotted Centipede (1)	1 1/2
8	Allip (1)	3
10B	Osyluth Skeletons (3)	3
15	Fiendish Red Wyrmling (1)	4
17	Vaasta, Male Lizardfolk (1)	3
	Shengam, Female Lizardfolk Drd1 (1)	
	Swamp Lizard (1)	
21	Imps (2)	4
23	Skazzyg, Female Tiefling Wiz(Cjr)3	4
	Oskullo, Bat Familiar (1)	
24	Gnoll Zombies (3)	4
	Human Monk Zombies (2)	
25	Ghouls (4)	4
	Falling Block Trap (1)	3
27	Gnoll Skeletons (4)	3
	Human Monk Skeletons (3)	
28	Osyluth Skeleton	1
	Grandil, Male Gnoll Ghost Ftr1	4
29	*Glyph of Warding* Trap (1)	3
33	Allip (1)	3
38	Animated Daggers (6)	3
39	Osyluth (1)	6
40	Osyluth Zombies (4)	4

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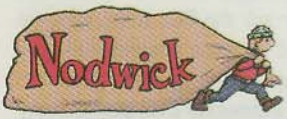

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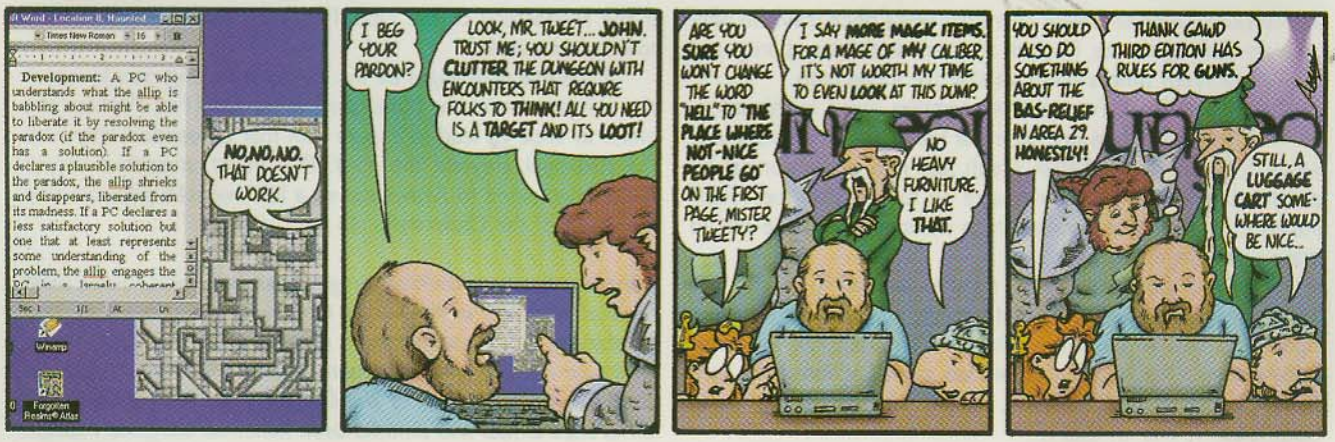
by Aaron Williams


Development: A PC who understands what the allip is babbling about might be able to liberate it by resolving the paradox (if the paradox even has a solution). If a PC declares a plausible solution to the paradox, the allip shrieks and disappears, liberated from its madness. If a PC declares a less satisfactory solution but one that at least represents some understanding of the problem, the allip engages the
NO, NO, NO. THAT DOESN'T WORK.
I BEG YOUR PARDON?
LOOK, MR. TWEET... JOHN. TRUST ME; YOU SHOULDN'T CLUTTER THE DUNGEON WITH ENCOUNTERS THAT REQUIRE FOLKS TO THINK! ALL YOU NEED IS A TARGET AND ITS LOOT!
ARE YOU SURE YOU WON'T CHANGE THE WORD "HELL" TO "THE PLACE WHERE NOT-NICE PEOPLE GO" ON THE FIRST PAGE, MISTER TWEETY?
I SAY MORE MAGIC ITEMS. FOR A MAGE OF MY CALIBER, IT'S NOT WORTH MY TIME TO EVEN LOOK AT THIS DUMP.
NO HEAVY FURNITURE. I LIKE THAT.
YOU SHOULD ALSO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE BAS-RELIEF IN AREA 29. HONESTLY!
THANK GAWD THIRD EDITION HAS RULES FOR GUNS.
STILL, A LUGGAGE CART SOMEWHERE WOULD BE NICE...

Armistice

Ending the Cold War

by Peter Vinogradov

artwork by Theodor Black • cartography by Craig Zipse

"Armistice" is a D&D adventure designed for a party of four 7th-level characters, although it can be modified for PCs of levels 3-12 using the tips in the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar. The adventure takes place in the mountains separating the lands of the Pale and the Frost Barbarians in the GREYHAWK setting. The party should possess several silver or magic weapons and include at least one fighter, barbarian, ranger, or paladin. Some means of protection against cold-based effects would also be helpful. Before running this adventure, you should review the lycanthropy rules presented on pages 218-221 of the Monster Manual. *You should also review the climbing rules given under the Climb skill on page 65 of the* Player's Handbook.

Magic Items Monsters Non-Player Characters (NPCs) Objects Settlements Traps

Adventure Background

The Larushka (la-ROOSH-ka) and Bezhumni (beh-ZOOM-nee) clans have never known peace. Their respective rulers, Chieftain Larosh and Chieftain Keiyacs, have spent decades trying to seize one other's lands. In 588 C.Y., both clans faced invasion by the Frost Barbarians of the north and pledged loyalty to Theocrat Ogon Tillit of the Pale, devout servant of Pholtus, god of order and bright celestial phenomena. The following year, Larosh and Keiyacs sent their private armies to investigate rumors of a rich and fertile valley in the Griff Mountains. When they discovered the valley, the two armies began fighting for control of it. When Theocrat Tillit learned of the conflict, he ordered Larosh and Keiyacs to make peace so that they might claim the valley together for the greater glory of Pholtus.

In spite of the mandate for peace, the armies of Larushka and Bezhumni continue to fight. The troops in the valley have been cut off for six months, awaiting reinforcements that now will not arrive. They have lost many friends in those months and are ready to kill their enemies first and ask questions later. Though both chieftains care little for the welfare of these troops, they are facing revolution as the people grow increasingly unnerved by the war. The safe return of those soldiers, along with the newly signed armistice, is essential to stem public unrest and satisfy the wishes of Theocrat Tillit.

Unbeknownst to both chieftains, however, a Bezhumen patrol has discovered a new ally in their war against Larushka's army. In a remote mountain cave they discovered a pack of winter werewolves imprisoned in magic gems. One of the Bezhumen clerics, Stepyn Pushtoev, has released some of the werewolves and forged a pact with them, promising to release the rest of the pack in exchange for help in annihilating the valley's remaining Larushki soldiers.

Adventure Summary

Equipped with a map and some limited knowledge about the soldiers, the PCs are ferried to the edge of the valley by boat along the Yakinaj River. As they begin their search for Larushki and Bezhumen troops, they have several planned encounters that alert them to the presence of the winter werewolf threat. Their first actual encounter with the werewolves leads the PCs to a mountain cave inhabited by the cleric Stepyn Pushtoev. Here, they must face the cleric, his guards, and the remaining lycanthropes before returning to Larushka to claim their reward. With some minor variation, the sequence of events in this adventure can be summarized as follows:

- The PCs are offered a mission and given maps and other information regarding the situation in the valley.
- The PCs explore the valley, find several soldier camps, tell the military leaders about the newly formed armistice, and hear news of "silver wolves" attacking soldiers.
- As they move north through the valley, the PCs are stalked by winter werewolves who attempt to steal their map.
- The PCs follow the winter werewolves' trail up Mount Arreis, where they encounter Stepyn Pushtoev, his guards, and his lycanthrope "allies."
- The PCs find any remaining soldier camps before returning home.

Beginning the Adventure

The adventure begins when the PCs arrive in the small town of Muskovya (moo-SKOH-vee-uh), in the lands held by Chieftain Larosh of Larushka. As is customary, they must register at the main gate, stating their names, occupations, and country of origin. As they enter, they witness parades and much laughter throughout the city. The people are celebrating because the

war in the Nebo Valley (NYEH-buh) is over, and a peace treaty has been signed between Larushka and the neighboring lands held by Lord Keiyacs of the Bezhumni. To seal the pact, Grygori, the eldest son of Chieftain Keiyacs, has arrived to formally request from Larosh the hand of his only daughter, the beautiful Sossandra.

If they speak to enough locals, the PCs hear many women rejoicing at the news that their husbands and sons will not have to die this year. For some, however, their joy is tempered with fear for loved ones who still remain camped out in the valley (and from whom they have heard nothing in months).

The PCs' tour of Muskovya is soon interrupted, as news of foreign heroes travels swiftly in this community. Elite guards find the PCs and inform them that their presence is requested at the stronghold of Chieftain Larosh.

If the PCs honor Larosh's request, they are led through two heavily guarded gates and into the throne room where a court is assembled. Beside Larosh are seated his wife, Sofia, and their daughter, Sossandra. Several of the lord's officers and servants are also in attendance, and the escort makes sure to point out the stately presence of Prince Grygori of Bezhumni.

The PCs are led to stand before the throne, and a herald announces the characters by name. When he finishes, Larosh addresses the PCs as follows:

"Honored travelers, I welcome you. You have arrived at a joyous time and bear witness to a rare moment in our proud history. Until one week ago, we had been fighting a war of several years with our neighbors, the people of Bezhumni.

"To our north lies the Nebo, a valley of breathtaking wilderness and untold riches surrounded by some of the highest peaks in the region. Ever since the first caravan routes to this hidden paradise were established, both clans have sought to claim it. Each spring for the past ten years, the best of our young men have set out to the Nebo to do battle, leaving nothing but death and anguish to show for it.

"Through the saving grace of Pholtus and the wisdom of his servant, Theocrat Tillit, peace is at hand. Our young men will live to sire a new and wiser generation.

"You must be wondering why I have summoned you here, for surely you have heard this story in the streets a thousand times already. Alas, I have the arduous task of attending to a circumstance that can thwart the advent of a new and wondrous era. You see, a number of soldiers from both our clans remain entrenched in the Nebo or in the mountain caves surrounding the great valley. Little news has come by way of merchants in the past few months, and we fear that our soldiers continue to kill each other while wives and children await their safe return.

"We had considered sending our remaining troops to the valley to bring their comrades home, but we cannot afford to risk any misunderstanding. We are still working toward a foundation of trust. That is why Pholtus, in his divine wisdom, has sent you, to bring the message of armistice to our sons in the Nebo.

"Therefore, what say you, noble travelers? Will you carry our message of peace? We will pay you for your trouble, though as I am a judge of character, I believe that for you, being the ushers of a new age will bring its own reward."

Before they leave, the PCs are given official letters from both Larosh and Grygori. Each letter bears an appropriate seal and a short message directed to the commanding officers in the Nebo, informing them of the armistice and instructing them to end the war and bring their forces home.

The PCs are given a detailed map of the Nebo Valley (see next page), upon which Larosh and Grygori have noted the likely hideouts of their armies' commanding officers. Grygori warns PCs that Bezhumen soldiers are skilled at setting traps and gives them some clues to watch for (see "Bezhumen Tactics" below). He seems doubtful that the PCs can avoid all of the traps, however.

Finally, Larosh provides rations for the PCs' journey, as well as any clothing, mundane weapons, or climbing equipment the PCs feel they need.

Reaching the Valley

Tailor the journey to the valley to suit your campaign. It is recommended that the PCs have at least a two-day journey before entering the valley. Unless the PCs object, Larosh hires a merchant boat to take the PCs from Muskovya, up the Yakinaj River, to the fortified town of Chyebirsk (cha-BEERSK). From there, it takes three days on foot to reach the Yakinaj Pass. There are no encounters the first day out of Chyebirsk, but after that, use the "Random Wilderness Encounters" sidebar.

Toward the end of the second day, the PCs reach the most difficult stretch of the Yakinaj Pass, where the mountains rise up sharply and hug the river closely. The only navigable footpath ascends 400 feet up the mountainside. The path is wide

Scaling the Adventure

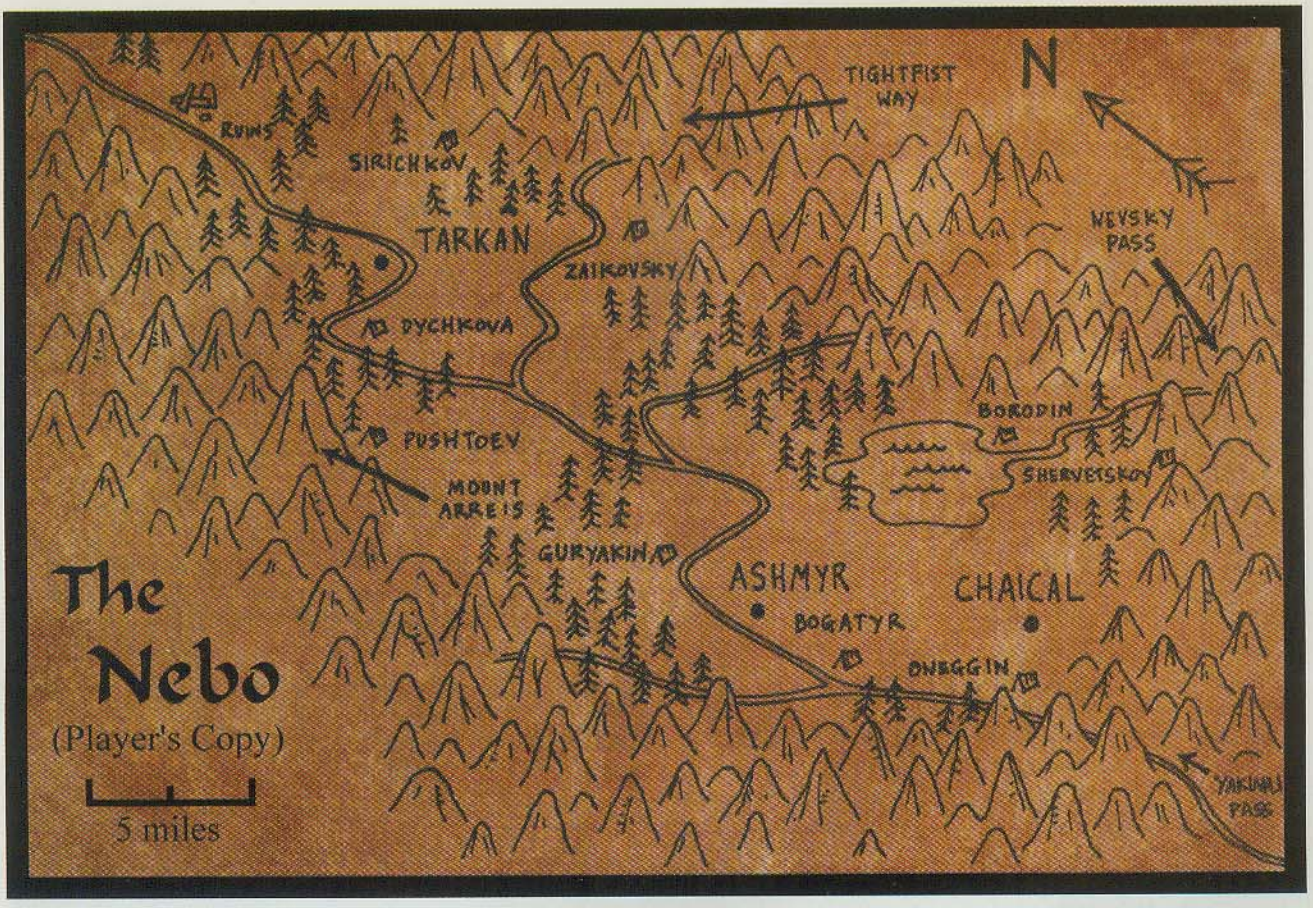
"Armistice" is designed for a party of four 7th-level PCs. The PCs' foes include six winter werewolves, each of whom is a Challenge Rating 7 creature, and Stepyn Pushtoev, a 9th-level cleric. These encounters will need to be modified for PCs of lower or higher level.

3rd- to 6th-level PCs: Give the winter werewolves fewer barbarian levels or reduce the number of freed werewolves using the following simple formula:

Number of werewolves = party's average level - 1

Make Stepyn 2 levels higher than the average party level, and consider allowing the PCs to ally with the soldiers in the valley. Read the "Soldier Camps" sidebar at the end of the adventure and decide, in advance, which NPCs would be most likely to unite with the PCs. The soldiers might help the PCs set traps for the werewolves, escort the PCs to Mount Arreis, or help repel winter werewolf attacks. If the PCs lack a healer, allow one or more NPC clerics to accompany them.

8th- to 12th-level PCs: Higher-level groups will find the adventure challenging as written, particularly if you make frequent use of random encounters. Rather than adjust the statistics for the Silver Hackles and Stepyn Pushtoev, consider increasing the number of adversaries. Perhaps Stepyn has freed more members of the Silver Hackles, summoned a couple *lesser planar allies* (achaierai, azer, barghest, belker, fire elemental, invisible stalker, janni, rast, xorn), *animated* several fallen soldiers, or enslaved a clan of yeti.



enough for one man-sized person to navigate safely. However, there is a shear drop to one side, and anyone suffering an attack here must make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 15) or fall 1d10 × 10 feet before hitting another ledge. The footpath rejoins the river after 7 miles.

Using the Maps

The tactical information given by Lord Larosh and Prince Stepyn includes the names of each commanding officer left in the valley, as well as their last known location. Information on these officers and their forces is consolidated in the "Soldier Camps" sidebar at the end of the adventure.

The map given to the PCs by Larosh and Grygori is inaccurate, as many of the soldier camps have relocated. The true locations of the soldier camps (at the time when the PCs enter the valley) are noted on the DM's map of the Nebo.

Climate in the Nebo

The Griff Mountains enclose the Nebo on all sides. A mighty river divides the large evergreens that blanket the valley floor. Patches of snow and ice cover the ground, and chimney smoke rises from the thatched houses of what appear to be two small settlements at the southern end of the valley (Ashmyr and Chaical). Another settlement (Tarkan) lies farther north.

Although this scenario occurs during winter, you can alter the season to suit your campaign. In any case, the mountains should be chilly even at 100 feet, and at 600 feet the air should be downright frigid. Feel free to adjust the weather during the adventure, using inclement conditions to impose penalties to combat and reinforce the proper mood.

Finding the Soldiers

Two of the PCs' greatest challenges will be locating and confronting the Larushki and Bezhumen soldiers. Fully reinforced, each army once consisted of over eight hundred men, moving throughout the valley in well-organized ranks. Now, there are fewer than two hundred men altogether, scattered in small companies throughout the valley, hoping to hold on to what strategic points they can until relief comes from home.

During the day, each company sends out patrols of 1d4+2 soldiers. For every hour the PCs spend within 1 mile of an encampment, they have a 1-in-6 chance of encountering a patrol. (Roll 1d6; a 1 indicates an encounter with a patrol.) For every hour the PCs spend in this radius, there is also a 1-in-8 chance that they come across the company's base camp. If more than one encounter is indicated in one hour, roll to see which occurs first.

If an encounter is indicated, have the PCs and the soldiers make opposed Listen/Move Silently and Spot/Hide checks. If the PCs make no effort to hide themselves, assume that their Move Silently and Hide skill checks are equal to their respective skill bonuses. Thus, a character with a +8 bonus to Hide skill checks would automatically get an 8 on her Hide skill check. Assume that the soldiers, who are trying to remain concealed, roll a "13" on both their Hide and Move Silently skill checks. Feel free to modify skill checks based on the weather.

Encounter Reactions

As the DM, you need to make decisions for the soldiers based on the information in the "Soldier Camps" sidebar, the circumstances of the encounter, and the general tactics of each

Random Wilderness Encounters

Check for random encounters as the PCs journey to the Nebo and during their exploration of the valley proper. Roll d% to determine what, if anything, PCs encounter and consult the following table:

d% Roll	Encounter Description	EL
1-2	Trolls (2)	7
3-4	Owlbears (3)	7
5-6	Grimlocks (9)	7
7-8	Dire Wolves (4)	7
9-10	Dire Boars (3)	7
11-12	Dire Bear (1)	7
13-15	Yeti (3)	7
16-17	Nebar Travelers (2d4)	–
18-20	Fallen Soldiers (3d6)	–
21-00	No Encounter	–

Trolls: Trolls roam the foothills of the mountains but are not found in the valley proper. If this encounter happens when the PCs are in the valley, treat as "No Encounter."

Owlbears: These creatures are wandering 1d4 miles from their cave lair in the mountains. PCs who follow their tracks and search the caves find 4d12 × 1,000 sp in treasure.

Grimlocks: Grimlocks are encountered only in the mountains. If PCs are not in the mountains, treat this result as "No Encounter." Each grimlock wields a battleaxe and carries 1d4-1 gems (worth 10 gp each).

Dire Animals: Although there are several dire wolves and boars in the Nebo Valley, only one dire bear has ever been spotted, though it claims the entire valley as its territory. If this dire bear is slain, this encounter cannot occur again.

Yeti: The yeti are encountered only in the mountains. If the PCs are not in the mountains, treat as "No Encounter."

Statistics for the yeti are given below:

Yeti: CR 3; Large Humanoid (8 ft. tall); HD 4d8+4; hp 22; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 14 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural); Atk +7 melee (1d6+4 [×2], claws); Reach 10 ft.; SA grab; SQ cold immunity, fire vulnerability; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +9, Hide +2 (+17 in snowy conditions), Move Silently +6, Wilderness Lore +6.

SA—Grab (Ex): If a yeti hits an opponent with one of its claw attacks, it can make a free grappling check without provoking an attack of opportunity. If the grappling check is successful, it squeezes and deals an additional 1d6 points of damage plus 2d6 points of cold damage.

SQ—Cold Immunity (Ex): Yeti are immune to cold-based effects.

SQ—Fire Vulnerability (Ex): Yeti suffer an additional 50% damage from heat- and fire-based effects.

Nebar Travelers: The Nebar are 1st- to 4th-level commoners (roll 1d4 to determine level) who reside in the Nebo Valley. Friendly but reclusive, they come from one of three settlement (Ashmyr, Chaical, and Tarkan). Nebar travelers are typically furriers, trappers, or traders. They are aware of the warring soldiers and the winter werewolves but shun them. If the PCs aren't within a mile or two of a Nebar settlement, treat this as "No Encounter."

Fallen Soldiers: PCs stumble upon the burial sites of fallen soldiers, each marked with a simple notch on a tree or a sword planted in the ground.

Soldiers killed by winter werewolves are found half-buried in the snow and might present clues as to the nature of their attackers. In all cases there are bits of weapons and armor scattered about, but nothing of value. This encounter occurs only within the valley; if the PCs aren't in the valley, treat as "No Encounter."

army (described below). For instance, if the PCs have their weapons drawn when they stumble across a patrol, they might be attacked. Once the encounter begins, it is up to the PCs to convince the soldiers of their intent. Until peaceful intentions are established, any encounter with the soldiers should be treated as Hostile. The PCs can adjust the soldiers' attitudes through careful roleplaying or Charisma, Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate skill checks. (See "NPC Attitudes" on page 149 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.)

When the PCs finally confront the officers in charge of the various camps, use the information in the "Soldier Camps" sidebar to run each officer properly. Each officer is given a Challenge Rating; each time the PCs convince an officer to leave the valley, award XP as if the PCs had defeated the officer in combat (using the Experience Point Awards table on page 166 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

The PCs might persuade certain officers to assist them in ending the threat of the winter werewolves (by helping to build traps, lure the werewolves into ambushes, and so forth). This should require some astute roleplaying or, at the very least, a Diplomacy skill check or two. In any event, don't let the NPCs do the PCs' work for them. The soldiers are tired and eager to leave the valley; if the PCs delay their departure, they are not serving the wishes of their employers.

Larushki Tactics

The Larushki soldiers are accustomed to fighting in open terrain and on level ground. They typically wear chainmail emblazoned with their clan's coat-of-arms (a gold hammer on azure) and carry longswords and longbows. In battle, archers fire cover shots at long range (depending on terrain) while the swordsmen split into three groups, one darting forward and taking cover near trees while the other two move to flanking positions. The Larushki soldiers do not pursue opponents into the mountains.

Bezhumen Tactics

Bezhumen soldiers are known for their speed, hardiness, and climbing prowess. Each wears a flexible suit of white studded leather and carries a heavy crossbow. Given the slow rate at which these weapons fire, the Bezhumen prefer to use them from high ledges or great distances. If they must fight hand-to-hand, they consider the rapier the only civilized weapon.

As they have a distinct advantage in the mountains, some Bezhumen might be camped on or flee to mountain locations that can only be reached by climbing.

Traps (EL 4 per deadfall, EL 3 per snare, EL 2 per rockslide): Bezhumen soldiers are expert trap-setters; a group of twenty soldiers can erect thirty or more deadfalls and snares in less

than a day. For every half-hour spent walking (or climbing) within a 1-mile radius of a Bezhumen base camp, there is a 1-in-6 chance of encountering a pit, snare, or rockslide trap (your choice). Rockslide traps are found near mountains only. All three trap types are activated by hidden tripwires. Regular snowfall helps to conceal tripwires, even up the ground around deadfalls, and cover up piles of rocks set into the mountainside, making the traps difficult to spot casually.

Spiked Pit Trap (6 feet wide × 10 feet deep): CR 4; 1d6 points of damage plus 1d4 3-foot-tall wooden spikes (+10 melee; 1d6/crit ×3); Reflex saving throw (DC 20) avoids pit; Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 15).

Snare Trap (15-foot-diameter concealed net): CR 3; anyone caught in the net is suspended 5 feet over the ground and immobilized (treat as pinned); trapped prey can cut free with a Tiny or Small edged weapon by dealing 10 points of damage to the net; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Strength check (DC 26) to tear free; Escape Artist check (DC 26) to slip free; Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 15).

Rockslide Trap (15-foot-wide rockfall): CR 2; 3d6 points of damage; Reflex saving throw (DC 20) halves damage; Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 17).

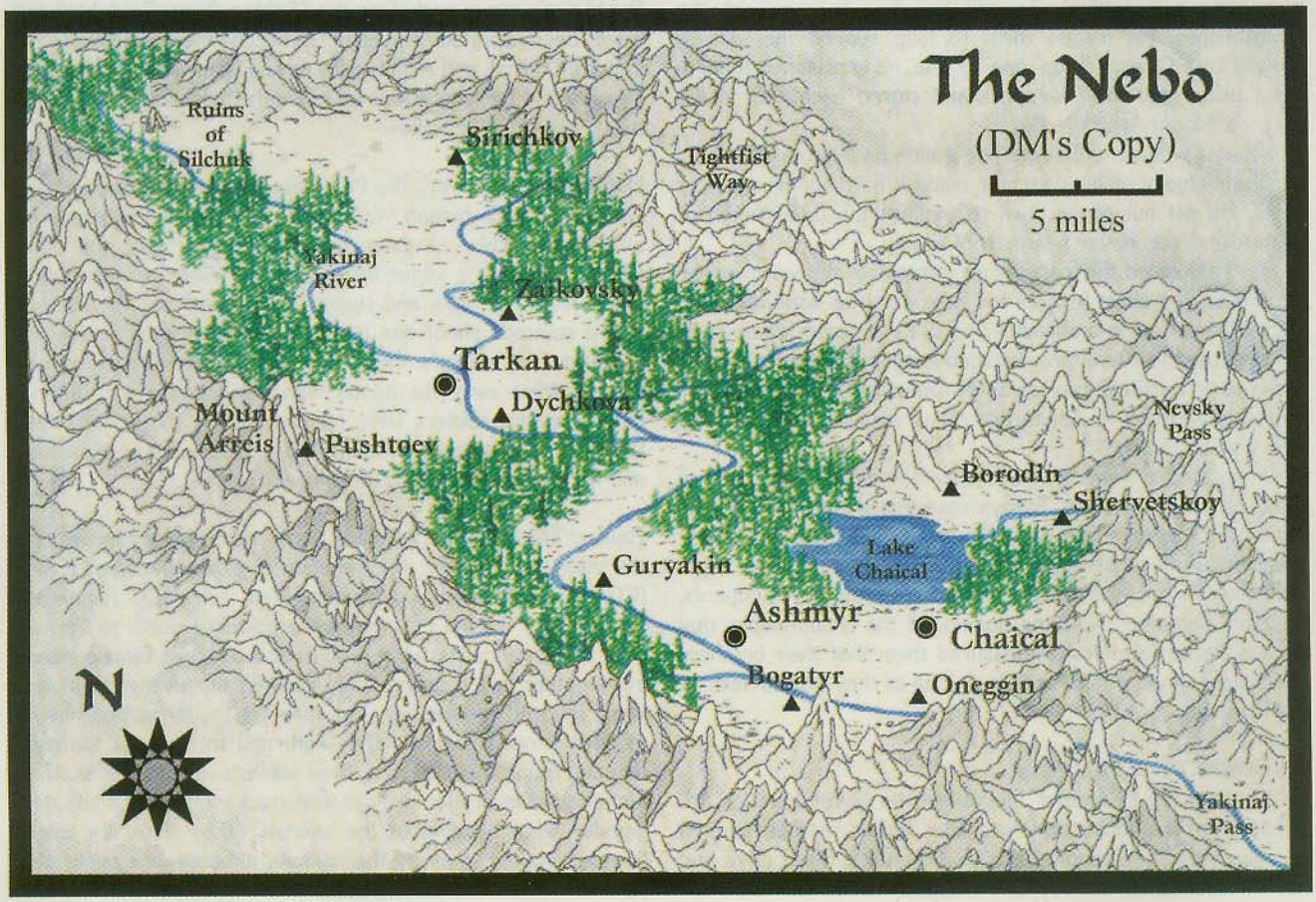
Since the PCs were told about the Bezhumen traps, allow each PC make a Spot skill check (DC 30) whenever the party stumbles upon a trap. A successful check means that the PCs have spotted the tell-tale signs of a Bezhumen trap. PCs can actively search for Bezhumen traps in their path. In this case, use the Search check DCs given above. While actively searching for traps, the PCs move at half their normal rate.

Razumil and the Werewolves

Two hundred years ago, in the Vesve Forest, a tribe of elves were driven from their homes by evil marauders. During their exile, they encountered a roving band of humans who had also been chased from their homes. The two groups banded together and headed east to the frigid Griff Mountains. One of the human women was the runaway daughter of Razumil, a wizard in the northern lands. Razumil's alliance with the leader of the marauders prevented him from defending his daughter's clan. Instead he used his powers to search the Griff Mountains for a safe and habitable refuge. At last, he discovered the isolated Nebo Valley and used his powers to guide the exiles there. For decades, the elves and humans thrived in the Nebo.

Years later, a group of them pushed north and founded a settlement called Silchuk. There, they attracted the attention of a rare breed of lycanthropes. One year after its founding, the settlement of Silchuk lay in ruins. The winter werewolves, having tasted the blood of humans and elves, began moving south in ravenous packs. In three months, they had claimed over six hundred victims as far south as Lake Chaical, and among them was Liana, Razumil's daughter.

Razumil, enraged by his loss, slew hundreds of the winter werewolves until all that remained were the twelve members of a pack called the Silver Hackles. Although this pack had escaped destruction by taking refuge in a cave high on Mount Arreis, they were eventually found. As Razumil prepared to blast them out of existence, one of the lycanthropes came forward and begged for mercy. She told the wizard that she and her comrades were all that remained of their species, and that



they would gladly accept any other punishment rather than see their race extinguished. Razumil struck a bargain with the lycanthropes. He forced them to help rebuild the villages around Lake Chaical. Then, one by one, he imprisoned them in gems using *trap the soul* spells and stored each gem in the cave on Mount Arreis.

Razumil's fate is unknown. For a time he lived in the Nebo, but the memory of his daughter made it hard for him to stay there. He set out on his own to explore the lands north of Silchuk and was never heard from again.

Razumil placed the magic gems containing the werewolves' life forces in a chest (except for two, which he kept with him) and hid the chest in a chamber sealed by a *wall of stone* spell. He also placed several *programmed images* about the chamber designed to ward off explorers. He also placed an *arcane mark* on the cave floor to discourage other wizards from messing with his handiwork.

When Stepyn Pushtoev's company (see the "Soldier Camps" sidebar) found the cave, Stepyn recognized Razumil's *arcane mark* and *dispelled* the wizard's *programmed images*. After breaching the *wall of stone*, he opened the chest and removed the gems. He broke six of the stones, releasing the occupants, and with some careful lying convinced the lycanthropes that he was Razumil's envoy. He assured them that their brothers and sisters would also be freed—as long as they helped destroy the Larushki.

Trail of the Silver Hackles

By the time the PCs enter the valley, the Silver Hackles are already on the loose and wreaking havoc. Father Stepyn requires that they report back to him every three days and has threatened to destroy one trapped winter werewolf for every day they are late. The Hackles have hit Commander Dychkova's group early (see the "Soldier Camps" sidebar) and have been spotted traveling between the settlements of Tarkan, Chaical, and Ashmyr. To make PCs aware of the Silver Hackles and their nefarious task, use the following hooks as the party explores the valley:

Hook 1: The Survivor. The PCs meet a Larushki soldier named Pitook (CG male human War3) who survived the werewolves' attack on Dychkova's camp and is trying to warn the other camps. He gives a vague description of "swift-moving wolves that attacked at night and seemed to breathe ice." He says he saw a comrade shoot one of the wolves in the chest and not penetrate the animal's thick hide. Commander Dychkova was able to drive away the beasts with her magic mace, but not before several soldiers were torn to pieces. The wolves were last seen heading toward Mount Arreis, where Stepyn Pushtoev and his men are known to be camped.

Hook 2: The Passerby. As the PCs are traveling near or through the village of Ashmyr, they encounter a tall elf named Kvijak (CG male elf Com1) and his daughter, Tulya (CG female elf Com1). They tell the PCs that while traveling north to Tarkan, they saw three large, white wolves and a human female standing together in a clearing. They ignored the strange sight and were ignored themselves, but they felt guilty at not having aided the lonely woman. They returned to the spot the next day and found the bodies of three soldiers torn to pieces. They identified at least four distinct wolf tracks in the area and now wonder what became of the woman. (They think she might have attempted to study the animals, although she might also have been mentally disturbed.)

Movements of the Silver Hackles

The Silver Hackles pose the greatest threat to the PCs' success, since they periodically find and attack groups of entrenched soldiers. (They do not discriminate between Larushki and Bezhumen forces.) As the PCs travel as far north as Mount Arreis, they begin to hear howling at night from several miles away (the sound of the Hackles coordinating their hunt). As the night goes on, the howling eventually becomes more feverish and is intermingled with the faint cries of men. If the PCs follow the sounds (either at night or in the morning), they find the remains of scouting parties from the closest soldier camp. These should be unburied men who have obviously been torn by claws.

Shortly after the PCs leave Dychkova's camp (see "Soldier Camps" sidebar), their scent is picked up by the Silver Hackles. Once they find the PCs, the Hackles proceed with great caution and attempt to learn more about these outsiders. They stalk them for at least a day, trying to pick up tidbits of their conversation (given their exceptional hearing, this can be from a considerable distance). They do not howl, since they do not wish to frighten the PCs. For every 8 hours of pursuit, the PCs are entitled to a Listen check (DC 27). PCs who make the check hear a twig snapping behind them and, with a successful Spot check (DC 22), catch a glimpse of their pursuer(s).

As soon as the werewolves discover the PCs' purpose, Katya and Pushka, two of the Silver Hackles, disguise themselves as Nebar travelers (valley natives) and approach the PCs. In broken Common, they say they are heading to the nearest settlement and have recently seen several badly injured soldiers. When asked where, they attempt to describe the location but do so with difficulty, in the hopes that one of the PCs will show them their map. If they get the map in their hands, Katya and Pushka flee for Mount Arreis while their comrades run interference in wolf form. When these two first approach, their comrades remain hidden at a distance of roughly 500 feet (which they can close in 2 rounds, should the need arise).

If they are unsuccessful at getting the map, or if their deception is discovered by the PCs (for example, by means of a *detect evil* spell), Pushka assumes wolf form and attacks with breath weapons while the rest of the Hackles rush to their aid. As this happens, Katya takes a half-move away and attempts to assume her hybrid form. (This requires a Control Shape skill check. The DC is 10 during a full moon, 15 at night without a full moon, and 30 in daylight. The DC is reduced by 5 each time she or another member of her pack takes 15 or more points of damage.)

The Hackles flee before either side deals any serious damage. As they flee, Katya shouts, "Retreat to Arreis!" Her hope is that she and her companions can reach the cave, check in with Stepyn Pushtoev, and leave before the PCs arrive. She is gambling that the PCs are able to put an end to Stepyn's plan and perhaps give her an opportunity to recover the remaining gems in Pushtoev's possession.

Reaching the Cave at Mount Arreis

Whatever the outcome of the PCs' first encounter with the Silver Hackles, the lycanthropes should head back to Mount Arreis in enough of a hurry to leave a discernable trail for PCs to follow. PCs with the Track feat must make a successful Wilderness Lore skill check (DC 12) for every mile of pursuit. PCs without this feat must make a successful Search check (DC 22) to find and follow the trail.

Winter Werewolf Statistics

These ten winter werewolves form a tightly knit pack. There are five adult males, their four female mates, and one unmated female. There were also two children in the pack, but the gems containing these creatures were taken from the valley by the wizard Razumil and do not figure into this adventure.

Creatures (EL see below): All of the Silver Hackles are 4th-level barbarians with the following common statistics:

Winter Werewolf Bbn4 [human form]: CR 7; Medium-Size Shapeshifter (6 ft. tall); HD 6d10+30; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural); Atk +9 melee (1d3+5 subdual, unarmed strike); SA breath weapon, curse of lycanthropy, lycanthropic empathy, rage (2/day), trip; SQ alternate form,

Nebar Settlements

The settlements of Ashmyr, Chaical, and Tarkan are home to the Nebar, peaceful and reclusive descendants of elves and humans who came to the Nebo Valley two hundred years ago searching for a new home.

The Larushki and Bezhumen soldiers occasionally trouble the Nebar for food and shelter, but neither side wishes any harm to befall these benevolent valley folk. Thus, the Larushki and Bezhumen armies have taken care not to drag the Nebar into their conflict. The Nebar are unhappy that the armies of Larushka and Bezhumni have spilled blood in their peaceful valley, but the Nebar refuse to mediate or intervene in the conflict.

Each Nebar settlement is governed by a council of three elders. The Nebar are typically 1st- to 4th-level commoners (roll 1d4 to determine level), although each village has its share of craftsfolk (1st- to 4th-level experts) and defenders (1st- to 4th-level warriors). The exact composition of each settlement is left to you, the DM.

All three Nebar settlements have 12-foot-tall log palisades enclosing a couple dozen wooden buildings.

Ashmyr (hamlet): Conventional; AL CG; 100-gp limit; Assets 600 gp; Population 120 (68% human, 22% elf, 10% half-elf).

Authority Figures: Salavas (elder), male elf Com3; Irdu, female elf Com2; Mikael, male human Com1 (elder).

Notes: Ashmyr rests on the east shore of the Yakinaj River and is surrounded by a 12-foot-tall log palisade. Its primary industries are fishing and logging.

Chaical (hamlet): Conventional; AL CG; 100-gp limit; Assets 2,000 gp; Population 200 (78% human, 18% elf, 4% half-elf).

Authority Figures: Gilveg (elder), male elf Com4; Elezan, male elf Com2; Arvekkas, male half-elf War4 (elder).

Notes: This settlement stands on the south side of Lake Chaical. Its primary industries are fishing, woodworking, and fur trapping.

Tarkan (village): Conventional; AL CG; 200-gp limit; Assets 4,500 gp; Population 450 (62% human, 24% elf, 14% half-elf).

Authority Figures: Enzhikur (elder), male half-elf Com3; Karys, female elf Com2; Shule, male human Com3 (elder).

Notes: Tarkan is the largest Nebar settlement in the valley and contains most of the Nebo's smiths and metalworkers. Its primary industries are mining and fur trapping.

Winter Werewolves

Natural winter werewolves are born with silver hair—a clue to their true nature. Those afflicted by the curse of lycanthropy start to change hair color immediately after their first transformation.

Winter werewolves have traits and abilities common to all lycanthropes (as detailed in the *Monster Manual,* pages 217-219), with the following changes and additions:

Ability Score Adjustments: Str +4, Dex +2, Con +6.

Special Attacks: Winter werewolves gain the following additional special attacks:

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of cold (15 feet) every 1d4 rounds; 4d6 points of damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 16) halves damage. A winter werewolf can use its breath weapon while biting in hybrid or animal form.

Improved Bull Rush (Ex): In wolf or hybrid form, a winter werewolf can Bull Rush a defender without provoking an attack of opportunity.

Lycanthropic Empathy (Ex): Winter werewolves get a +4 racial bonus to checks when influencing the attitudes of wolves, dire wolves, worgs, and winter wolves. They can also communicate simple instructions to these animals.

Protective Rage (Ex): Natural winter werewolves mate for life, though it is common for the pack leader to have several mistresses. These creatures always put the safety of their mates ahead of their own. If a winter werewolf sees its mate killed or badly wounded, it assumes animal form (if not already in that form) and flies into a berserk frenzy, attacking until it or all of its enemies are slain. This condition duplicates (and is not cumulative with) the rage ability of barbarians.

Trip (Ex): A winter werewolf that makes a successful bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action (see page 139 in the *Player's Handbook*). If the trip attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the winter werewolf.

Special Qualities: Winter werewolves possess the following additional special qualities:

Cold Subtype: Cold immunity; double damage from fire except on a successful save.

Scent (Ex): Winter werewolves can detect any creature by scent within 30 feet. They automatically possess the Track feat and gain a +8 racial bonus to Wilderness Lore checks when tracking by scent.

Skills: In humanoid form, a winter werewolf receives a +4 racial bonus to Listen, Search, and Spot checks. In animal or hybrid form, these bonuses increase to +8. A winter werewolf in hybrid or animal form gains the following skills in addition to the character's skills: Hide +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +7, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +1. In animal or hybrid form, its natural coloration grants it a +7 racial bonus to Hide checks in areas of snow and ice.

Afflicted winter werewolves have the Control Shape skill (see page 218 of the *Player's Handbook*). Natural winter werewolves instead have the Improved Control Shape feat, which gives them full control over their shapeshifting abilities.

Feats: In hybrid or animal form, a winter werewolf gains the following bonus feats: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Run, and Track.

cold subtype, damage reduction 15/silver, scent, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +15 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +9, Will +6; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +12, Jump +12*, Listen +10**, Search +4**, Spot +5**, Swim +10*, Wilderness Lore +6. *Feats:* Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Control Shape (natural winter werewolves only), Run.

* Reduce the Jump and Swim skills of afflicted winter werewolves by 2 and give them the Control Shape skill with a +5 bonus. ** Includes +4 racial bonus.

Winter Werewolf [winter wolf or hybrid form]: Large Shapeshifter (8 ft. long or tall); Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 50 ft.; AC 17 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural); Atk +10 melee (1d8+7, bite); SA improved bull rush, protective rage, see above; SQ see above; other statistics same as above.

Skills: Climb +12, Hide +6 (+13 in snowy or icy conditions), Jump +12, Listen +17* (includes Alertness feat), Move Silently +7, Search +8*, Spot +17* (includes Alertness feat), Swim +10, Wilderness Lore +9*. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Control Shape (natural winter werewolves only), Improved Initiative, Run, Track.

* Includes +8 racial bonus.

The Silver Hackles are not likely to be encountered with any armament other than their fists, teeth, and breath. They spend their nights in animal form and in the day gather up whatever clothing and weapons they've managed to stash nearby (usually collected from their victims).

Use the table on page 101 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to determine the Encounter Level (EL) of any encounter with the Silver Hackles. Consider reducing the number of werewolves if the PCs are injured or few in number.

The individual members of the pack are described in "The Silver Hackles" sidebar (page 144). The ones already released by Stepyn Pushtoev are listed first.

Mount Arreis

Although some of the valley natives remember stories of the mysterious "silverhairs" who helped rebuilt their villages after the Year of the Wolf (the year in which the winter werewolves slew hundreds of the Nebar people), all share an inexplicable fear of Mount Arreis. The mountain is where monsters dwell, and rumors tell of the strange wolves who once hid there from "the great wizard" Razumil.

The cave of the Silver Hackles is situated 2,000 feet above the valley floor. The ascent is steep and treacherous, requiring Climb checks every 100 feet. (To determine the DC of each Climb check, consult page 65 of the *Player's Handbook.*)

If the PCs lose the Hackles' trail, finding the cave could prove challenging. Make use of various clues to help guide the PCs, such as climbing spikes left in the rock, tracks, and of course, intermittent howling. If the PCs obtain an aerial view of the mountain (through flying, for example, or the use of familiars), they notice five caves. The PCs can also secure a guide (CG Human Exp4; Wilderness Lore +6) from one of the Nebar settlements. The guide knows that yeti inhabit the lowest two caves and can help find footpaths leading most of the way up to the other three caves. The guide can also reproduce the map of Mount Arreis on page 122.

Feel free to add more caves to the mountainside. These might be empty or harbor other monsters from the "Random Wilderness Encounters" table on the next page.

Caves of Mount Arreis

Five natural caves dot the south face of Mount Arreis. Three yeti (two adults and a juvenile) inhabit each of the lower two caves—see the "Random Wilderness Encounters" table for yeti statistics. The two middle caves are empty but could serve as shelters for injured PCs.

Tucked behind a snow-covered outcropping of rock called the Spire is the entrance to the Caves of the Silver Hackles.

Caves of the Silver Hackles

This small cave network is inhabited by Stepyn Pushtoev, his company of Bezhumen soldiers, and any surviving members of the Silver Hackles. The winter werewolves, if present, tell Stepyn about the PCs (and the armistice, if they learned about it). Fearing that the Hackles might be followed, he commands them to remain and defend the caves. If the PCs reach the caves before the winter werewolves return with their report, Stepyn releases the two more winter werewolves (Elluk and Tyotya) from the gems and orders them to defend the caves.

Stepyn Pushtoev does not want to hear about the armistice between Larushka and Bezhumni. Since forming his tenuous alliance with the Silver Hackles, he is convinced that he can obliterate the remaining Larushki forces in the valley and become a hero of his people. He is unwilling to parley and orders his forces to attack before anyone has a chance to show him the letter from his chieftain. If Stepyn is *charmed*, he can be persuaded to read the letter, although he is still driven by his hatred of the Larushki to remain in the valley. More powerful magic (*suggestion* or *domination*) is needed to make him abandon his mission to crush the Larushki and seize control of the Nebo Valley.

If he is shown the letter and not compelled by magic to abide by his chieftain's demands, Stepyn dismisses the document as an obvious forgery—a Larushki trick. However, the soldiers under Stepyn's command are eager to end the war (not to mention their so-called alliance with the winter werewolves) and agree to leave the valley, with or without Stepyn, provided the PCs convince them the letter is genuine. You can either let the players roleplay this, or have them make a Charisma skill check (DC 25) to succeed.

So long as Stepyn holds at least one of the gemstones, the Silver Hackles do not attack him. However, they eagerly attack any Bezhumen soldier who falls out of Stepyn's favor. If the Bezhumen soldiers turn against Stepyn, they gladly aid the PCs in any battle against the winter werewolves.

1. Entrance Chamber.

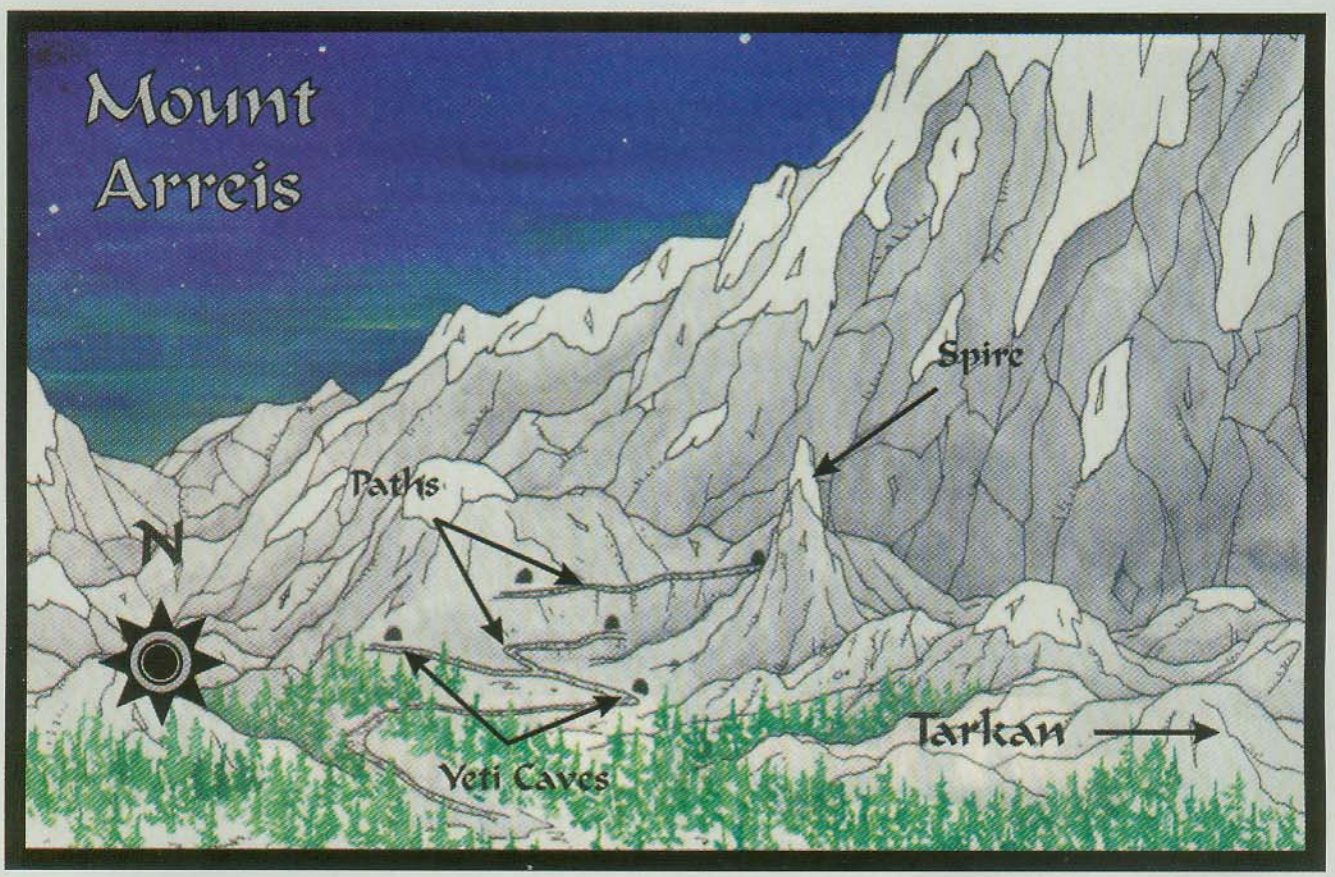
This 10-foot-high cave is littered with sleeping mats, camping gear, clothes, and a few weapons. A fire burns at the back of the cave near an opening in the north wall that is partially blocked by a 5-foot-tall stack of wood.

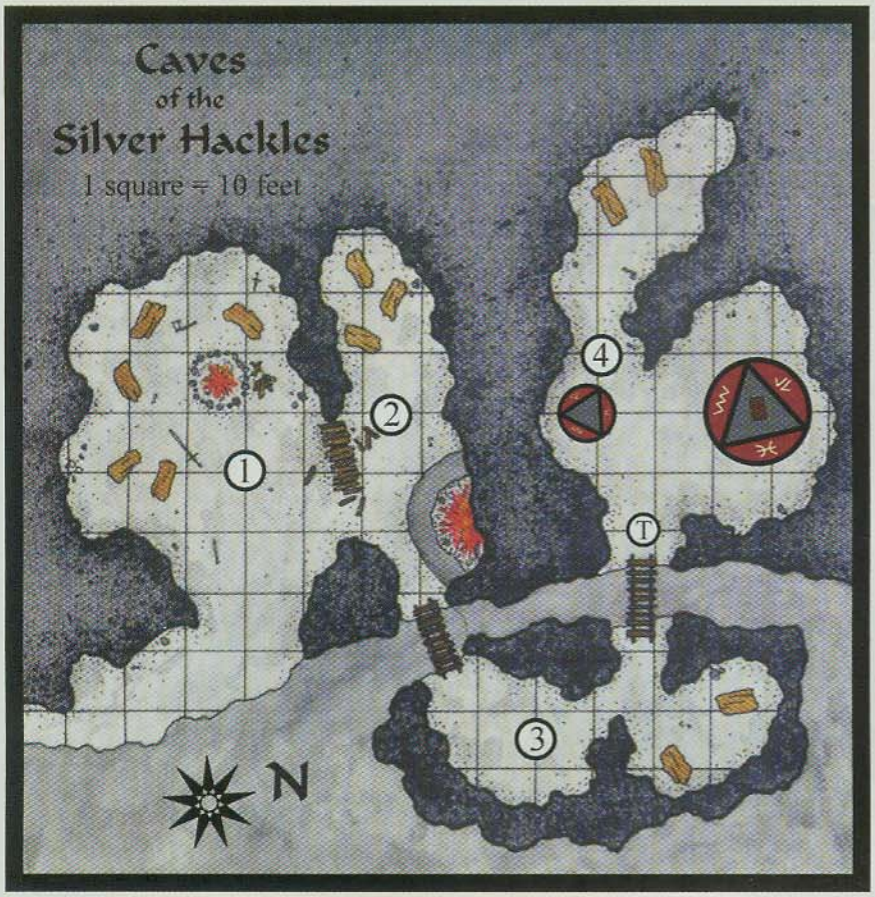
The fire is set back far enough so that its light is undetectable from the outside. The opening on the north wall leads to area 2.

Creatures (EL 7): Five Bezhumen soldiers stand guard here, awaiting reports from the winter werewolves.

Bezhumen Soldiers, Male Human War3 (5): hp 20 each; see "The Soldier Camps" sidebar for complete statistics.

Tactics: The mouth of the cave affords and excellent view of the mountainside, and thus the soldiers cannot be surprised





unless the PCs have some way to conceal their presence (such as *invisibility* spells). If the soldiers notice the PCs, they warn the other inhabitants of the caves and fire crossbows at the PCs from the cave entrance. In melee combat, the soldiers use flanking and Aid Another actions (see page 135 in the *Player's Handbook*) to assist one another.

Meanwhile, the soldiers in area 2 take positions behind the pile of wood, which provides three-quarters cover (+7 cover bonus to AC, +3 cover bonus to Reflex saving throws). From there, they fire their heavy crossbows.

2. Fire Pit.

Three sleeping pallets lay on the floor in the west corner of this narrow cave. To the right, the corridor is nearly blocked by a bulging semicircular wall that almost reaches the 10-foot-high ceiling. This bulge is smoother and less natural than the surrounding cave wall, and wisps of smoke and flame dance out from the top. Just past the bulge is an opening that appears to lead outside.

The stony "bulge" encloses a fire pit and was created by Stepyn using *stone shape* spells. Stepyn uses the fire to keep the Silver Hackles in line; whenever they challenge his orders, he threatens to drop one of their gem-trapped brethren into the fire. (Dropping a gem into the searing fire causes it to shatter in 2 rounds. The freed winter werewolf takes 3d6+6 points of fire damage each round thereafter unless it is somehow rescued.)

The opening just beyond the fire pit leads to area 3 (in the Spire). A wooden bridge built by the Bezhumen soldiers connects the two caves, but the bridge is light and can be easily picked up and dragged in from either side. The bridge spans a 100-foot-deep plunge down the mountainside and can support no more than 300 lbs. at once.

If an alarm is raised, the soldiers in area 3 pull away the bridge leading to that area, forcing PCs to find some other way to cross the 10-foot-wide gap.

Creatures (EL 6): Three Bezhumen soldiers are either sleeping on the pallets (if surprised) or waiting behind the wood pile to ambush intruders with their heavy crossbows (see area 1 for details).

Bezhumen Soldiers, Male Human War3 (3): hp 20 each; see "The Soldier Camps" sidebar for complete statistics.

3. Inside the Spire.

This chamber is carved out of a large spire that has split from the face of the mountain. Two sleeping mats lay in the north end of the cave.

Another opening spanned by a light wooden bridge connects to area 4.

Creatures (EL 5 for the soldiers, more if the winter werewolves are present): Two soldiers stand guard here. Any winter werewolves not destroyed by the PCs are here as well.

Bezhumen Soldiers, Male Human War3 (2): hp 20 each; see "The Soldier Camps" sidebar for complete statistics.

Tactics: If intruders are detected in area 1, the soldiers pull the south bridge into this room and stand with crossbows loaded at the north end of the cave. If they cannot hold off intruders, they retreat to area 4 and pull away the north bridge to discourage pursuit. The winter werewolves fight to the death.

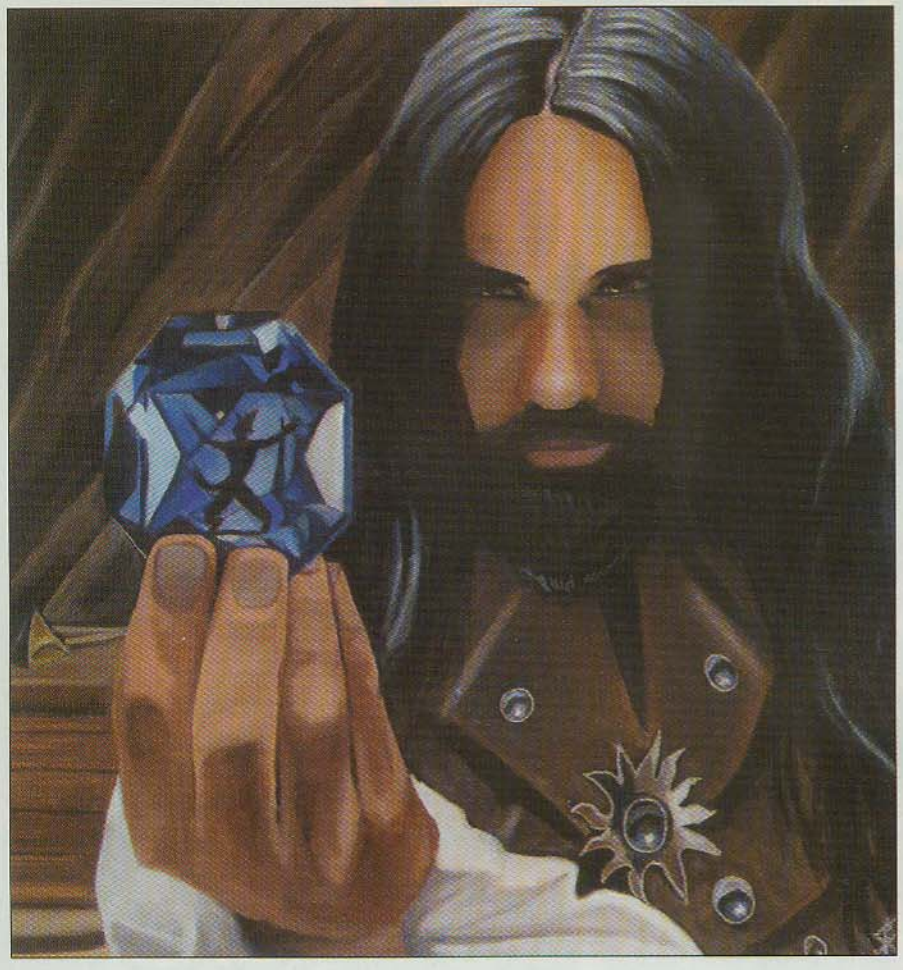
4. Stepyn's Den.

This chamber has two circles painted on the floor, each inscribed with strange markings. Resting in the center of the larger circle is a wooden chest. Tucked away in the western niche are two sleeping mats.

This is where Razumil stored the gems housing the life forces of the Silver Hackles. Although the cave once contained a number of magical effects and traps, Stepyn has succeeded in dispelling all but one of them (see below). Stepyn has also placed his own **Trap** on the entrance (marked T on the map).

The strange runes in the circles are *arcane marks* left by Razumil. Allow PCs a Knowledge (arcana) skill check (DC 25) to correctly identify one of the marks as Razumil's personal rune. The wooden chest is marked with a sign commonly used to signify danger. (You can make this as simple as a skull and crossbones or invent another symbol appropriate to the campaign.)

Touching the chest triggers one of Razumil's *programmed illusions* (Stepyn has been unable to dispel it). The illusion creates an image of Razumil, described below:



A spectral image materializes over the chest, assuming the form of a robed man with shoulder-length white hair. The ghostly figure holds up one hand and speaks to you in a grave tone.

"Hold, traveler. Within this box lay the gleaming prisons of murderers who will repay your meddling by spilling your blood. Their race once fed upon the flesh of innocent people, and I have sentenced them to eternal imprisonment. As a man of knowledge, I cannot be responsible for their extinction. But beware! Free them, and you release death itself!"

With that warning, the image fades.

Razumil's illusion appears as a man in his early sixties. The illusion activates each time the chest is touched. The chest is empty, as the remaining four gems are in Stepyn's possession.

Creatures (EL 11): Stepyn Pushtoev, the Bezhumni cleric, is here with his lieutenant, Tyegg the Boarmaster. See the "Soldier Camps" sidebar for their statistics.

Trap (EL 3): No one other than Stepyn and the Bezhumen soldiers may enter the cave without triggering the *glyph of warding* placed by Stepyn at the entrance. The freed Silver Hackles have been warned of the trap and do not enter the cave until they are certain the *glyph* has been discharged or disarmed, as they take extra damage from fire-based attacks.

↗ ***Glyph of Warding:*** CR 3; 5-foot-radius explosion; 4d8 points of fire damage, Reflex saving throw (DC 17) halves damage; Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28).

Concluding the Adventure

When the PCs leave the valley and return to Muskovya, they receive a welcome appropriate to the measure of their success. If they have been entirely unsuccessful, Larosh at least wants an account of what they saw and pays the PCs a minimal fee for their trouble (500 gp in gems). The people of Larushka have placed great hope in the adventurers and are quick to voice their disappointment.

If fewer than half the soldiers return (roughly 48 Larushki and 33 Bezhumen), there is no great fanfare. Some citizens might thank the PCs for their efforts, and the rest hide their disappointment. If more than half of the soldiers return, there is a banquet held at Larosh's palace in honor of the PCs. The families of both chieftains attend. Before the banquet, the chieftains want to hear details of the PCs' adventure. Stories of the winter werewolves are of particular interest. If Stepyn's involvement is conveyed, the cleric and his men are immediately denounced by Chieftain Keiyacs of Bezhumni and banished (if they is still alive). When the PCs leave Muskovya, a phalanx assembles in the streets to bid them farewell.

The PCs' compensation depends on the number of soldiers who return. The PCs are given 100 gp in gems for every surviving soldier. In addition to the gems, the PCs are offered a plot of land in the Nebo Valley—specifically, the region around the ruined city of Silchuk. The ruins of Silchuk are not detailed in this adventure, so feel free to expand them to suit your campaign. If the PCs choose to accept the plot of land, they must deal with the dangerous wildlife and restless spirits believed to inhabit the area. Furthermore, shortly after the festivities in Muskovya, a joint army of Larushki and Bezhumen soldiers sweeps through the valley, erecting bases and plundering all available resources. They begin extorting protection payments from the Nebar people (using the word "taxes," of course). Eventually, a Nebar resistance force rises up to chase off the armies, and the PCs might be forced to choose sides.

Even if the PCs slay all of the winter werewolves in the Nebo, there are still two Silver Hackles who were taken from the valley by Razumil. These creatures might someday escape their prisons and return to the Nebo to create a new generation of winter werewolves, terrorizing the PCs and Nebar alike.

Experience may be awarded based on the number of soldiers safely returned. Each soldier who returns alive is worth 100 XP to the party. Thus, if most survive, the PCs can expect to split roughly 17,000 XP.

Peter wishes to thank Jonathan Heiles, whose winter werewolves of Fort Isle inspired the antagonists in this adventure. This is Peter's first adventure in DUNGEON Magazine.

Soldier Camps

Assume that each camp is found in the condition described below. Some of the camps have been ravaged by winter werewolf attacks, hence their small size.

Typical Larushki Soldier, Male Human War3: CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 3d10+3 (includes Toughness feat); hp 23; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+5 chain mail); Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, longsword); or +3 melee (1d8/crit ×3, longbow); AL N(G); SV Fort +5 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +1, Will +1; Str 12, Con 11, Dex 10, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +4, Handle Animal +1, Jump +3, Listen +3 (includes Alertness feat), Ride +3, Spot +3 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Possessions: Chain mail, longsword, longbow (1d20+4 arrows).

Typical Bezhumen Soldier, Male Human War3: CR 2; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 3d10; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Atk +4 melee (1d6+1/crit 18-20, rapier); or +3 melee (1d10/crit 19-20, heavy crossbow); AL N(G); SV Fort +5 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +2, Will +1; Str 12, Con 11, Dex 12, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Climb +6, Jump +3, Listen +2 (includes Alertness feat), Ride +2, Spot +3 (includes Alertness feat), Swim +3, Wilderness Lore +5 (includes Skill Focus feat). *Feats:* Alertness, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Wilderness Lore).

Possessions: Studded leather armor, rapier, heavy crossbow (1d10+2 bolts).

Typical Larushki or Bezhumen Priest, Male Human Clr1 (Pholtus): CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid; HD 1d8-1; hp 5; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+5 breastplate); Atk +0 melee (1d8, heavy mace); AL LG; SV Fort +4 (includes Great Fortitude feat), Ref +0, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +2, Diplomacy +3, Heal +6 (includes Skill Focus feat), Knowledge (religion) +4. *Feats:* Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Heal).

Possessions: Breastplate, heavy mace, holy symbol of Pholtus (a wooden circle inscribed with a burning candle).

Spells (3/2+1): 0—*guidance, light, resistance;* 1st—*bless, endure elements*, shield of faith.*

* Domain spell. *Domains:* Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills; cast Divination spells as Clr2), Sun (greater turning 1/day).

The Camps and Their Leaders

The following camps (Larushki first, then Bezhumen) are indicated on the DM's map of the Nebo. Use the pregenerated NPC statistics presented in Chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (pages 47-58) for the camp's leaders, if necessary.

Oneggin Camp (Larushki)

Leader: General Rûl Oneggin, Male Human Ftr7 (CR 7)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 15/1

Oneggin is the most feared man in Larushka's army. He is tall and broad, with thick bristles of graying hair jutting out of his bearded head like porcupine quills. Although horror stories about his command are numerous, no soldier leaves his regiment without an air of superiority at having survived it.

Oneggin is a natural tactician, treating every combat like a game of chess. He is known to use unruly members of his regiment as bait in drawing out foes. Although he enjoys the exercise of war, Oneggin values peace even more and is delighted at the news of armistice. Should he join the PCs, he questions every decision they make, and his presence might compromise negotiations with the Bezhumni. Further, he views the PCs as hired mercenaries, whom he considers even more expendable than enlisted men.

Oneggin wields a *+1 flaming bastard sword.*

Borodin Camp (Larushki)

Leader: Captain Sergi Borodin, Male Human Ftr4 (CR 4)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 10/1

Borodin is a cautious man. He looks about 30 years old, wears a close-cropped beard, and is small in stature. His company is entrenched at the foot of the mountains, just past the opening of the Nevsky Pass. They are waiting for reinforcements (or enemies) so that they can go swiftly and alert their comrades.

Guryakin Camp (Larushki)

Leader: Captain Samizar Guryakin, Male Human Ftr5 (CR 5)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 19/0

Son of a celebrated war hero, young Samizar climbed the ranks swiftly, gaining his own command at the age of 21. He is known as a boastful man who enjoys praise. He is brave almost to the point of foolishness. He recognizes the opportunity for glory in helping the PCs and does not hesitate to offer his assistance.

Dychkova Camp (Larushki)

Leader: Commander Kira Dychkova, Female Human Clr7 (CR 7)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 20/0

Dychkova was one of the missionaries who introduced the worship of Pholtus to the region and was rewarded with this special post. She is fifty years old and wields a *+2 heavy mace* in battle.

Dychkova's company was the first to face the winter werewolves. Many perished or fled. Since the attack, she has been adamant about protecting the nearby settlement of Tarkan from this new threat.

Sirichkov Camp (Larushki)

Leader: Captain Marko Sirichkov, Male Human Ftr3 (CR 3)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 24/2

Sirichkov's rise to power is something of a mystery, as he is neither brilliant nor charismatic. He is, if anything, lucky.

During a fierce hailstorm, Sirichkov ordered his men to take refuge near the mouth of an unexplored cave where Bezhumen soldiers were secretly entrenched. Cold and wet, Sirichkov ordered his men to make a fire and ignited a pocket of natural gas. He and his men were blown clear by the blast, but the Bezhumen were mostly obliterated. Though his men do not respect him, they consider him a lucky charm and are inclined to do what he asks.

Reports last indicated that Sirichkov was camped on a mountain overlooking the entrance to the Tightfist Way. With the threat of avalanches, Sirichkov has moved his camp to the base of the mountain where the view is limited but the getaway is more certain.

Bogatyr Camp (Bezhumni)

Leader: Colonel Antonin Bogatyr, Male Human Bbn6 (CR 6)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 24/1

Bogatyr is a 7-foot-tall monster of a man. Born in the land of the Frost Barbarians, he was captured and sold as a slave to Chieftain Keiyacs. Although he respects law and authority when it serves him, Bogatyr dreams of building a farm in the Nebo and raising animals. He is delighted at news of the armistice.

Shervetskoy Camp (Bezhumni)

Leader: Colonel Pyotr Shervetskoy, Male Human Ftr6 (CR 6)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 23/1

Shervetskoy joined the Bezhumen army as a mercenary-for-hire and has little loyalty to Chieftain Keiyacs or to the church of Pholtus. He does not relish the prospect of going home, since he has long heard rumors of treasures buried in the surrounding mountains. If allowed to aid the PCs in their quest, he frequently distracts their efforts by suggesting they explore any caves they might find.

This company is camped high above the opening of the Nevsky Pass, where they hope to spot Larushki reinforcements. Their vantage point—a 1,000-foot-high ledge and cave—allows them a precise count of any forces approaching the pass. There are numerous handholds in the rock leading up to the ledge.

Zaikovsky Camp (Bezhumni)

Leader: Colonel Igor Zaikovsky, Male Human Ftr4 (CR 4)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 8/0

A bitter and lazy man, Zaikovsky made a few off-hand comments about one of Chieftain Keiyacs' secret concubines and found himself assigned to the Nebo, far from the comforts of his home. His company was thought to be heading for a large cave several miles south of the Tightfist Way. However, they suffered great losses when a pocket of natural gas exploded in the cave. They are now encamped in forest a few miles west of that location.

Zaikovsky has lost over two-thirds of his company. He prays daily for reinforcements and flees at the slightest hint of danger.

Pushtoev Camp (Bezhumni)

Leader: Stepyn Pushtoev, Male Human Clr9 (CR 9)
No. of Soldiers/Priests: 10/0

When Captain Sergei Orvas died in an avalanche, his company fell under the command of Father Stepyn Pushtoev, a 9th-level cleric of Pholtus. Pushtoev was once a beggar in the mountain settlements of Bezhumni. Famous for his many visions, one of which foretold the coming of Pholtus to the land, he was called to the royal palace to serve as an advisor to Chieftain Keiyacs' wife. Chieftain Keiyacs was jealous of Stepyn's hold over his wife, and the cleric soon found himself heading to war in the Nebo.

Stepyn Pushtoev is a handsome man with long black hair and a black beard. Convinced that an alliance with the Silver Hackles will spell Larushka's doom, he has allowed his own ambitions to become a "hero of the people" cloud his judgment. Although he tries to serve Pholtus faithfully, Stepyn is a wicked schemer and opportunist.

Hunted by Larushki forces, Stepyn's company fled to Mount Arreis and sought refuge in a high cave formerly inhabited by the wizard Razumil. There Stepyn discovered the cave's secret.

Stepyn is not well respected by the soldiers under his command. They would much rather take orders from Stepyn's lieutenant, Tyegg. Tyegg was a renowned boar hunter in Bezhumni and is known as the "Boarmaster" by those who serve with him. Tyegg does not trust the winter werewolves that Stepyn has blackmailed into service and fears they will turn against the cleric before long.

Stepyn Pushtoev, Male Human Clr9 (Pholtus): CR 9; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 11 in. tall); HD 9d8+27; hp 75; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 studded leather armor); Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1, *+2 light mace*); AL LN; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +12 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 8, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 18, Cha 17.

Skills: Climb +3, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +9, Heal +14, Knowledge (religion) +11, Listen +8 (includes Alertness feat), Profession (advisor) +6, Spellcraft +9, Spot +8 (includes Alertness feat). Feats: Alertness, Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Rod, Iron Will.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, *+2 light mace,* eight potions (*bull's strength, cure light wounds* ×2, *cure moderate wounds* ×2, *cure serious wounds, endurance, protection from elements*), *rod of metal and mineral detection,* belt pouch containing four gems (containing the life forces of four winter werewolves), purse of 25 gp.

Spells (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/3+1/1+1): 0—*create water, guidance* (×3), *light, purify food and drink;* 1st—*bless, deathwatch, endure elements, protection from chaos*, random action, shield of faith;* 2nd—*animal messenger, detect thoughts*, hold person* (×2), *spiritual weapon, summon monster II;* 3rd—*create food and water, daylight, magic circle against chaos*, magic vestment, searing light;* 4th—*divine power, freedom of movement, order's wrath*, summon monster IV;* 5th—*spell resistance, true seeing*.*

* Domain spell. *Domains:* Knowledge (all Knowledge skills are class skills; cast Divination spells as Clr10), Law (cast Law spells as Clr10).

Tactics: At the first sign of trouble, Stepyn casts the following defensive spells (in the order listed):

- *magic vestment* (+3 enhancement bonus to studded leather armor; lasts 9 hours)
- *magic circle against chaos* (+2 deflection bonus to AC and +2 resistance bonus to saves against attacks by chaotic creatures; lasts 90 minutes)
- *freedom of movement* (lasts 90 minutes)
- *spell resistance* (SR 19; lasts 9 minutes)
- *shield of faith* (+3 deflection bonus to AC; this does not stack with the deflection bonus afforded by the *magic circle against chaos*; lasts 9 minutes)
- *true seeing* (lasts 9 minutes)
- *divine power* (18 Strength; +7 bonus to attack rolls and +4 bonus to damage rolls; +9 temporary hit points; lasts 9 rounds)

Stepyn gives his *potions of endurance* and *bull's strength* to Tyegg before battle erupts. He uses his *summon monster* spells to summon creatures behind the party, cutting off their escape and allowing Tyegg to flank opponents. Stepyn casts *spiritual weapon* spell against an enemy spellcaster and *hold person* on weak-minded foes (fighters, barbarians, and such).

Tyegg the Boarmaster, Male Human Rgr4: CR 4; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 8 in. tall); HD 4d10+8; hp 34; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+4 Dex, +3 masterwork studded leather armor); Atk +6 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, masterwork longsword); or +4 melee (1d8+1/crit 19-20, masterwork longsword), +3 melee (1d6/crit 19-20, short sword); or +8 ranged (1d10/crit 19-20, heavy crossbow); SA Track, Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting (in light armor), favored enemy (Larushki); AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills: Climb +5, Handle Animal +5, Hide +8, Intuit Direction +3, Jump +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +8, Profession (hunter) +3, Ride +6, Search +3, Spot +2, Swim +3, Use Rope +6, Wilderness Lore +3. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Track.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, masterwork longsword, short sword, heavy crossbow (5 bolts remaining), pouch of 20 gp.

Tactics: Tyegg looks for any opportunity to join forces against the Silver Hackles, seeing any alliance with them as a recipe for disaster. Although he deems himself capable of leading the company, he dares not risk Stepyn's ire or offend the cleric's god. In battle, Tyegg fights with his longsword and short sword, reaping the advantages of wielding two weapons.

The Silver Hackles

Shayla (hp 60)

Shayla is Belka's wife. She is an impatient huntress who tires quickly of the chase and prefers the quick kill. She is a ravenous eater and is therefore a bit stocky. She is, in fact, so preoccupied with her own appetite that she will usually stop in the middle of combat to feast on downed prey. She is the mother of one of the pups taken by Razumil, although she wrongly believes the pup to be in one of the unbroken gems in Stepyn's possession. She has agreed to Stepyn's terms for the sake of her child but secretly vows to one day feast on the cleric's heart.

Belka (hp 77)

Belka, Shayla's husband, is slow-witted but deadly. His primary concern is for his wife, on whom he dotes with unmitigated loyalty. In the early days, when his race first discovered the elves, humans, and half-elves of Silchuk, he was a vocal advocate of purging the valley and is personally responsible for the deaths of over one hundred valley natives. Unlike Shayla, Belka never stops fighting until all enemies are slain or until it is clearly time to flee. In matters of strategy, Belka lets his wife decide the best course of action. However, he tolerates no more than five minutes of debate before rushing off himself to attack prey.

Pushka (hp 69)

Pushka regrets the wholesale slaughter of the Nebar people. Having spent his whole life as a beast in the mountains, he was instantly intrigued by the civilization of his victims. Their art, jewelry, and especially their music fascinated him, and he longed to share in that existence. He especially liked the way some of his prey seemed to have more pretty things than others and, moreover, how those things made them more highly regarded. He therefore prizes the few baubles he has managed to snatch from the Nebar folk. The only thing he values more is his wife Elluk, who still remains trapped in a gemstone.

Mishka (hp 64)

Dark and brooding, Mishka would probably have preferred to remain trapped in his gem. He barely tolerates other members of his species and despises nearly all other forms of life. His only true friends are rodents and birds. Though he takes some pleasure in stalking frightened prey, he has no taste for actual killing. His loyalty to the pack and to his mate, Natasha, comes entirely out of instinct, and he abides by Stepyn's terms to free her. At 5 ft. 8 in. tall, Mishka is short for his kind.

Katya Poroskeva (hp 54)

Katya grew up in the Nebo Valley. When the winter werewolves attacked her village, she fought so valiantly against them that she earned the affection of her current husband, Ilikut. Ilikut stole her away from the village and infected her with lycanthropy. It was Katya who so eloquently persuaded Razumil to spare the pack. During the period when she and her comrades helped rebuild the devastated Nebar settlements, she made certain that the Silver Hackles learned the Common tongue, hoping they could someday make a life for themselves in human society. Ever patient, she awaits the chance to make Stepyn pay for his audacity. Nonetheless, she can think of worse ways to bide her time than to kill a few unwitting soldiers.

Unlike the other Silver Hackles, Katya is not a barbarian. In human form, she has the base statistics of a 3rd-level commoner.

Katya, Winter Werewolf Com3 [human form]: HD 6d10+24; hp 54; Atk +5 melee (1d3+4 subdual, unarmed strike); SV Fort +12, Will +8 (includes Iron Will feat); Str 18, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11; see pages 117-118 for complete statistics.

Skills: Climb +6, Craft (weaving) +5, Listen +7, Ride +4, Search +5, Spot +8, Swim +10 (includes Skill Focus feat). *Feats:* Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Skill Focus—Swim.

Katya, Winter Werewolf [animal and hybrid forms]: Atk +9 melee (1d8+6, bite); other statistics same as winter werewolf statistics on pages 117-118.

Sobachka (hp 53)

Sobachka is quite old and already showing signs of being unable to keep up. Striving to demonstrate his youth and vitality, he eagerly participated in the massacre of the Nebar people. However, soon he will be forced to leave the pack and live out his days eating rodents. For now, the pack relies on his experience and judgment, and he hopes they continue to do so. His own wife (Marika) died many years before their imprisonment, and were she still alive, he would never have submitted to such an indignity.

Due to his old age, Sobachka's ability scores should be modified as follows: -2 to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution; +2 to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. His statistics should be adjusted accordingly.

Elluk [trapped in gem] (hp 73)

Elluk is Pushka's wife. For the most part, she is typical of her species: vicious, hungry, and sadistic. Unlike her husband, she cares little for the culture and trappings of civilized people and longs for a happier time when the only cares were hunting and killing. She despises the pack's leader, Ilikut, and bears even more intense animosity for his spouse, Katya. She has frequently challenged the latter for leadership of the pack and still bears many painful reminders of her failures.

Natasha [trapped in gem] (hp 60)

Natasha is Mishka's wife. Though she shares her husband's fascination with small creatures, she is inclined to devour them when he is not looking. Like Elluk, she is jealous of Katya and blames her for both their current situation and the dark mood of her husband. Nonetheless, she cooperates unfailingly with the wishes of the pack's leading couple, waiting for the proper moment to strike and assert her own dominance.

Ilikut [trapped in gem] (hp 80)

With the possible exception of his wife Katya, Ilikut is the undisputed leader of the pack. In fact, when winter werewolves were still numerous, he was feared and obeyed by all the other pack leaders. Though he was once driven to destroy all outside influences in the Nebo, his wife has made him see the benefits of civilization (primarily as a long-term food supply). Through her, he has also come to appreciate art and culture and has even considered visiting some of the great human cities.

Tyotya [trapped in gem] (hp 52)

Tyotya is Ilikut's mistress and, as such, is barely tolerated by Katya. For one of her species, she displays great spirituality and her pack regards her as a shaman (of sorts). She treats every hunt like a ceremony and takes the killing of prey very seriously. She possesses a natural Animal Empathy, with a +6 racial bonus to checks that involve influencing animals (this combines with her Lycanthropic Empathy). Ω